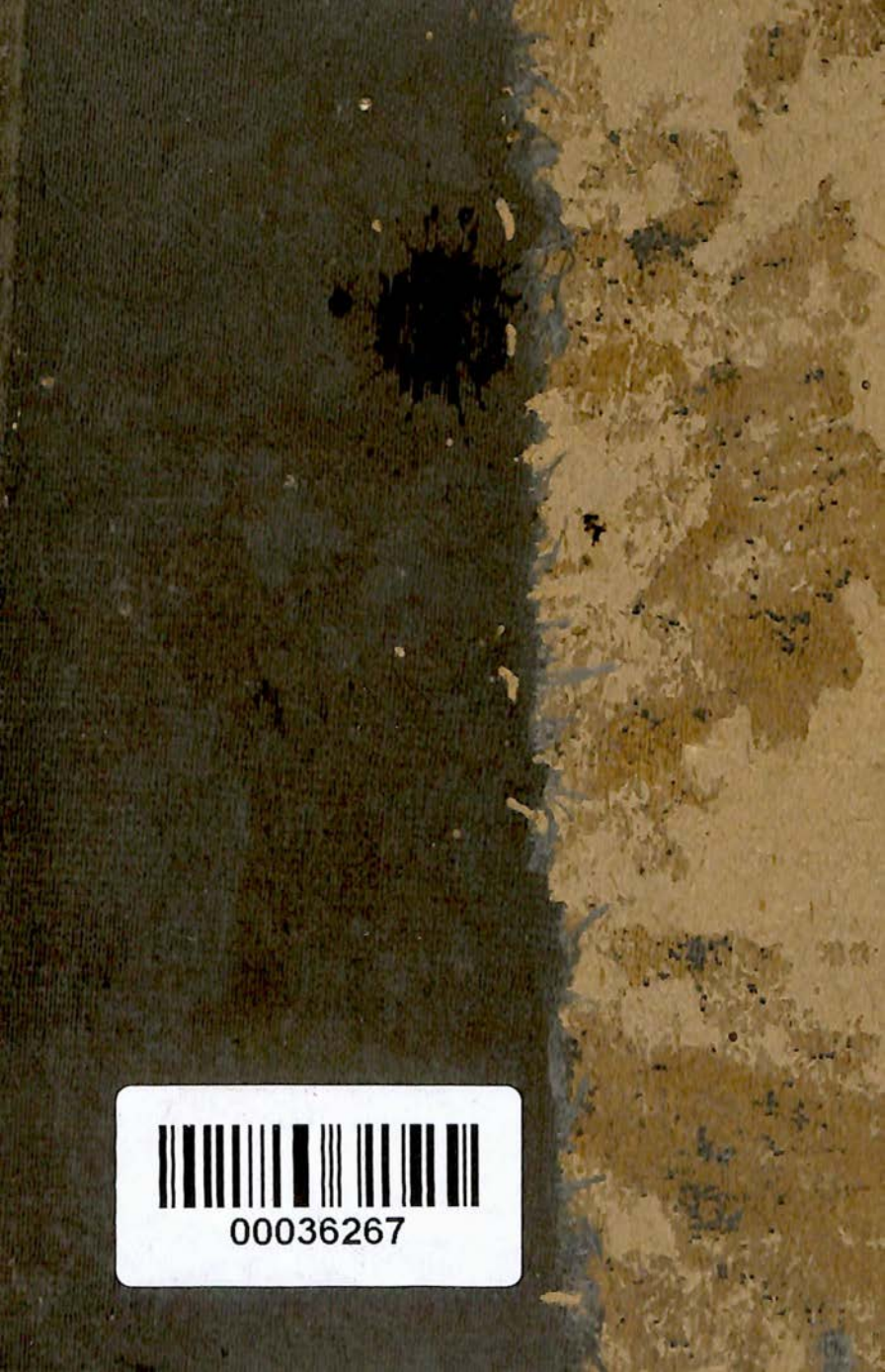

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THE

INVASION OF DENMARK

IN 1864.

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a.c

BY GALLENGA,

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT OF "THE TIMES" AT THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE DANISH ARMY.

"Una feroce
Forza il mondo possiede, e fa nomarsi
Dritto: la man degli avi insanguinata
Seminò l'ingiustizia; i padri l'hanno
Coltivata col sangue; e omai la terza
Altra messe non dà."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

THE CANNONADE.

PAGE

Back to Sönderborg.—The Fire Opened by the Prussians.—Loss of the Avnbjerg and Dybböl Village.—Hörup Hav.—Improvidence of the People at Sönderborg.—The Guards.—The King.—Fascination of War.—Strangers in the Camp.—Love of Destruction.—The Parsons of Als.—The Peasants.—New Phases of Life at Sönderborg.—Prospects of the War.—The Danish Soldiers. (*March* 16–27.) 1

CHAPTER II.

THE ATTACK ON DYBBÖL.

Early Awakening.—Attack on the Bastions.—The Danes across the Bridge.—The Rolf-Krake.—Foreign Tourists.—Mr. Herbert.—A Night Scene in Sönderborg.—Peace in the Midst of War. (*March* 18–*April* 1.) 53

CHAPTER III.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF SÖNDERBORG.

The Fire at Dybböl.—Shelling the Town.—Havoc in Sönderborg.—Personal Narrative.—Sönderborg after Bombardment.—The People's Exodus.—The Ruined Houses.—The Scattered Inhabitants.—New Calamities. (*April* 2–5.) . 77

CHAPTER IV.

ANXIOUS DAYS.

PAGE

Progress of the Siege.—The Havoc at Sönderborg.—The Farmyard at the Ladegaard.—A 'rare' Danish Gentleman.—The Danish Army.—Political Prospects.—The Position of Dybböl.—Its Approaching Downfall.—Losses and Sufferings of the Danes.—Affair of the 15th.—Loss of the Rifle-Pits.—Fall of Dybböl Windmill.—Destruction in the Sound.—Fall of Rönhave.—Incidents of the War.—Extremities of the Danish Army.—Projected Retreat.—The Coming End. (*April* 6–17.) 103

CHAPTER V.

THE LAST DAYS.

Fall of Dybböl.—Danish Losses.—Prussian Vandalism.—The Danish Dead.—Desolation of Sönderborg.—The Dybböl Position.—Causes of its Fall.—Farewell to Alsen. (*April* 18–23.) 165

CHAPTER VI.

DAYS OF MOURNING.

Copenhagen.—Impression made by the Fall of Dybböl.—Buoyant Spirit of the Danes.—Herr Hage.—A Military Burial.—Major V. Rosen.—An Unknown Officer.—The Conference.—Danish Misgivings about its Results.—The Abandonment of Fredericia. (*April* 24–30.) 197

CHAPTER VII.

COPENHAGEN.

Copenhagen.—Thorwaldsen.—Elsinore.—The Sound.—Hamlet.—Denmark and Sweden.—Whit Sunday.—Copenhagen at Dyr-have.—Roeskilde.—Life in Death.—Decline in Youth.—The Movement of the Population in Denmark.—The Copenhagen Mob.—Parties in Denmark. (*May* 1-15.) . . . 227

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONFERENCE.

PAGE

Hopes and Fears of the Danes.—England and France *v.* Denmark.—Nationality and Language in Schleswig.—The Armistice.—Behaviour of the Austro-Prussians in Jutland.—The 'Bird of Prey.'—The Man-Horse.—Endurance of the Danes.—Their Charity and Humanity. (*May* 15-31.) 275

CHAPTER IX.

SERENE DAYS.

Constitution Day at Copenhagen.—Dyr-have.—The King and Queen Holiday-making.—Fredericksberg and Tivoli.—The Dannebrog.—Opening of the Copenhagen and Elsinore Railway.—Danish and English Sailors.—Railway-opening in Denmark and Italy.—A Railway Banquet.—Royal Speech-making.—Sea-bathing in Denmark.—The Sound.—Marienlyst.—Danish Lodging-houses.—Elsinore. (*June* 5-11.) . . 309

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

The Conference.—Proposed Partition of Schleswig.—Political and Financial Consequences of such a Scheme.—European Complications.—German Tendencies.—Dano-German Affinities.—Parties in Denmark.—Denmark a Member of the Bund.—The Eider Canal.—Its Probable Use in the Hands of Germany.—Of Denmark and England.—English and Danish Interests.—Probable Results of the London Conference.—Hopes of the Danes.—Contemplated Resumption of Hostilities.—Its Consequences. (*June* 12-15.) 336

THE

INVASION OF DENMARK.

CHAPTER I.

THE CANNONADE.

Back to Sönderborg.—The Fire opened by the Prussians.—Loss of the Avnbjerg and Dybböl Village.—Hörup-Hav.—Improvidence of the People at Sönderborg.—The Guards.—The King.—Fascination of War.—Strangers in the Camp.—Love of Destruction.—The Parsons of Als.—The Peasants.—New Phases of Life at Sönderborg.—Prospects of the War.—The Danish Soldiers.

March 16–27.

I LEFT Middlefart last evening, March 16th, at ten, and making the best speed I could with post-horses, reached Assens at 2 A.M., and continued my journey as far as Faaborg, where I arrived at eight, having thus crossed Fünen, in all its length, in the course of the night. I was aware that no steamer would leave Assens till to-morrow, and I hoped to reach Sönderborg this day by chartering a fishing-boat at Faaborg, and crossing the Little Belt at Mummark in Alsen, a

place only eight miles distant from Sönderborg, across the little isle. The night was bitterly cold, and the roads were as hard with frost as in the hardest winter. The morning was unspeakably bright, but perfectly calm, and I spent no less than eight hours in crossing a branch of the sea hardly as many miles from shore to shore. The coast of Als or Alsen was plainly visible, though dim and dusky, from the place of my embarkation. Such wind as we had was from the east, consequently right against us, and as we tacked, and rowed, and toiled on our way, the boom of the cannon was wafted incessantly over the still waves, and the feathery smoke of gunpowder, and the wavy track of the shells, rose above the crest of the low hills forming the outline of the little island, and told us that the work of destruction was in progress. For a man who has been baffled all his life in his desire to witness some important scene of real warfare, and whose mission, moreover, was to be present at some such action and report upon it, my position of a distant spectator was sufficiently fretting. There was no other remedy than patience in the case, however, and I sat near the helm of the tub-like craft that conveyed me, with such resignation as I could command, commenting upon the folly that had taken me away from Sönderborg at the only available opportunity, after in vain

waiting for it more than six weeks, and mentally thanking the kind friends who had sent me on a fool's errand all the way to Jutland, with the vain hope that I should there see something like that real game of war for an exhibition of which it was vain to look for, from an opportunity about the Dybböl position.

When it pleased Heaven I at last came ashore at Mummark, but there fame had of course greatly exaggerated the terrors of the struggle now in progress; fearful stories were rife of the shells that showered like rain at Sönderborg, and neither entreaties, nor bribes, nor even threats, could procure me horses or carriage to get me over the eight miles' distance that separated me from the long-coveted scene of action. Where there is a will there is a way, however, and in my case the will was so uncommonly strong that in less than half-an-hour I succeeded in getting on. The thunder of artillery rose in intensity as the sun sunk in the horizon, and at every brow of a hill we ascended, at Tandslet, Hörup, Vollerup, and Ulkeböl, we could both see the flash and hear the boom, and follow the cloud of every shot as it lingered hazy and transparent on the still air of one of the purest skies that ever smiled in a frosty Northern sunset. More dense and ominous, other columns of smoke arose here and there over the vast landscape, and through these there

gleamed the vivid flames which consumed the homes of the inoffensive peasantry. War in all the grimness of its awful majesty was displayed before me as I advanced, and I had hardly alighted when some of the particulars of its havoc for the last three days were communicated to me.

The fearful wind that had accompanied me to Fünen and Jutland had done its work in Alsen and Sondeved, and by drying the ground of the Prussian lines had enabled these troops to accomplish their work, so that on the morning of Tuesday they were ready to unmask their batteries, and from the west of the peninsula of Broagerland, and from the heights of Rageböl, they opened fire on the left and right of the Danish position. Their main attacks were directed against the Dybböl bastions, but they found leisure to direct a score or so of shells upon the town of Sönderborg, some of which hit the Slot, or Castle, some fell on the houses and in the streets, but did, as I am assured, no harm to the inhabitants. The Prussians fired about 350 shots on Tuesday, 500 yesterday, and probably a larger number to-day. The bastions on the Dybböl position suffered no material harm—none, at least, that could not immediately be repaired. The loss of life was,

however, severe on the part of the Danes; a shell entered one of the blockhouses the day before yesterday, and another yesterday. A few men and officers were killed and wounded by the first; by the second no less than 40. To-day, together with the cannonade, a general fight took place, during which the Prussians advanced upon the position of Dybböl village, and upon the height of Avnbjerg. The readers who have had the patience to run through the foregoing narrative ought to be sufficiently familiar with the names of these places. The village of Dybböl lies on the right of the road, about half-a-mile beyond the bastions on Dybböl Hill. The Prussians had attempted to take the village on the 22nd of last month, but had fallen back before the fire of the Danish batteries, and the Danes had since taken up a position in its habitations, and intrenched themselves in its elevated churchyard. The defence was as obstinate as the attack was violent, and the Danes reconquered lost ground by three successive charges. They had, however, to give way before overwhelming forces, and as the day closed the Prussians remained in possession. The same occurred on the heights of the Avnbjerg, a hill rising on the left of the road, at about the same distance from the Danish bastions as Dybböl village, *i. e.* half an English mile; the summit was repeatedly taken and retaken on

either side, but remained in the end in the power of the Prussians. It would be vain to disguise the importance of this acquisition; for were they able to maintain themselves in it, in spite of the fire which will not fail to be directed against them from the bastions, had they power to rear batteries on its brow, they could undoubtedly keep up a tremendous fire against the Danish bastions with terrible effect. You are aware that the weakness of the position of Dybböl was always the left, which was from the beginning open to the Prussian fire from the crest of Broagerland. That crest, however, rises at a considerable distance, and although the Prussian cannon could, from that distant spot, reach Bastion No. 7 of the Danes, three miles off, yet no very serious injury could be done; no such damage as may be expected to accrue to the Danish position from the dangerous proximity of the Avnbjerg. Night put an end to the conflict of to-day, in spite of the brightest moonlight; but the struggle can hardly fail to be renewed to-morrow at daybreak, and no one can foresee with what result. The losses of the Danes have been severe, especially this day. No less than 250 wounded have been brought in.

Even as I am writing, at two o'clock after midnight, I hear a noise which seems to be very like the bursting of a shell within the town. Many

of the inhabitants have fled, and I must have met hundreds of carriages loaded with persons and furniture on my way from Mummark. But by far the greatest number remain; women and children, too. The Danish soldiers appear delighted at the prospect of real war; and they sing:

'Now shall we fight the Prussians again!'

There was some slack and lazy firing this morning, the 18th, from the Prussian batteries at Broagerland. The cannonade began shortly before ten o'clock, and all was silent at about 2 P.M. All the efforts of the Prussian artillery were directed against the bastions of the Dybböl position; but up to this time, so far as I learn, no serious impression has been made on the Danish works. The shots fired may have been about 200, ball and shell. The Dybböl bastions answered with no great earnestness, as if grudging or disdaining a useless waste of gunpowder.

I went out to the Dybböl Mill, with a hope to see a general engagement, but the windmill is one of the most conspicuous objects in the landscape, and as it is well known that the command of the outposts and many of the troops destined for action are generally concentrated there, the spot is, of course, the aim of all the enemy's

artillery. I next found a safer and far better view from the shore leading to the Sönderborg Ladegaard, a position from which I could look into the very bosom of the beautiful Vemmingbund, and the Prussian batteries posted on the cliffs overhanging its waters. We all fell into a mistake when we thought that the Germans had been making their preparations on the hill-crest of the Broager peninsula; or near that Broager church which, with its two tapering spires, rises on the very brow in a commanding position, and constitutes the great landmark on our left hand, as we look out from any elevated point at Sönderborg, whilst a similar church, also with twin spires, is equally a conspicuous object on our right, at Sattrup. In the middle, almost at equal distance from either of the two churches, we face our familiar friend, the Dybböl Windmill. When the Prussian batteries were unmasked, they were found to be not on the summit of the hills, but on the brow of the somewhat abrupt and craggy coast, as near to the Danish bastions across the bay as they could be contrived. The batteries which fired this morning were only three. However adroitly placed the batteries may be, and however great the power of the modern artillery with which they are armed, the Prussians must be aware that their fire can have, at the distance of about a mile-and-a-half, no very permanent and

irreparable effect on mere earthworks. This is possibly the reason why they attached so much importance to the capture of Dybböl village and of the summit of Avnbjerg, two positions which were left in their hands as the result of the heavy fight of all yesterday, and of which the Danes, I am sorry to say, have made no attempt to dispute the possession to-day.

The line of bastions at Dybböl was constructed by engineers who knew nothing of recent inventions, and calculated distance according to the range of the old-fashioned ordinance. The peninsula of Broagerland was left out of their reckoning, as placed altogether out of reach and out of harm's way. Consider their surprise on seeing the balls and shells of the Prussian 24-pounders sweeping from that same peninsula, not only all across the Vemmingbund, but also all over the line of bastions, so as to hit with unerring aim the parapets of Battery No. 10, placed almost near the coast of the Alssund, three English miles from the spot where the piece was fired. Consider also that about 200 shots fired at Bastion No. 5 all took effect upon their object (many of them penetrating the block-house, though without fatal effects, as it had been abandoned) with an accuracy which the old Danish artillery cannot even dream of emulating. So long as they fire only from Broagerland, the result cannot be so

very momentous; but what will it be if within three or four days they erect their batteries on the Avnbjerg, and exchange shots with the bastions of Dybböl Hill, within the distance of about two-thirds of an English mile? Moved by these considerations, the Danes no sooner were aware of their great loss yesterday than they turned their efforts to recover their lost position on Avnbjerg; and, as a preliminary movement, they attacked Dybböl village, by securing which they might have enabled themselves to make an onset upon Avnbjerg in front and in flank. The attempt failed, however, in spite of the bravery of the troops engaged. The first regiment sent against Dybböl village went three times to the charge, and was thrice repulsed by the Prussians, who sustained yesterday a hand-to-hand conflict with a bravery to which the Danes are ready to do justice.

But, although the attack on Dybböl village was unsuccessful yesterday, hardly any one of us went to bed in the night without the certain expectation that the experiment would be renewed in the morning. I was awake and up at six, and already felt confident that the cannon of Dybböl Hill would open fire on Dybböl village with earliest dawn. All was quiet till ten o'clock, however, and then, as I have already said, it was the Prussians who began the cannonade. Nearly

all the Danish troops were turned out at an early hour, nevertheless, and I and most men, astonished at the silence of the Danish batteries, thought that the village was rather to be taken with the bayonet than with the cannon; but as the day advanced, and no movement occurred, the terrible truth began to be spoken aloud, that no fresh endeavours should be made to recover the lost position of Dybböl village and Avnbjerg. Should this really be the case, and should the Prussians remain in possession of the latter-named hill, so as to have leisure to construct their batteries, it is not easy to foresee what chance the old-fashioned Danish smooth bores would have against the Prussian rifled pieces. The bravest men in the Danish army look grave as they discuss these matters. All they know is, that they will hold the position to the last drop of their blood, but they hardly dare to tell how long their heroic resolution will be of any avail.

I, who did not hesitate from the beginning to express my opinion that the abandonment to the enemy of the Broagerland, at the time of the retreat from the Dannewerk, would prove fatal to the defenders of Dybböl, shall not now conceal my conviction that the possession of the Avnbjerg is a great trump card that the Prussians have turned up in their bloody game against their enemy.

The few shells thrown by the Prussians upon Sönderborg on Tuesday have done considerable damage to several houses, without, however, injuring any living being. The demoralization of the towns-people since that first danger is not to be cured by the subsequent tranquillity the place has enjoyed. Nearly all who can, hasten their departure; houses and shops are literally emptied of their contents, and cartloads of furniture encumber all the thoroughfares. Some of these vehicles are laden with wretched old articles, which would hardly be worth the powder and shell that would have to be employed to destroy them, certainly not worth the waggon-hire which must be paid in order to save them; but household goods are not valued by the standard of price they would fetch at an auction mart. Old Granny's arm-chairs and Baby's cradle, I observed, and little Tommy's rocking-horse, constituted the main part of many a waggon load. All the shipping at Sönderborg harbour quitted their moorings at the very beginning of the bombardment and have not since come back. The steamers which carry the mails to Körsör and Assens start now from Hörup Hav. People ask themselves what wanton whim could prompt the Prussians to shell an open town, which gave them no offence, while their real antagonists were all away from it, manning the trenches of the Dybböl

position. The Prussians might urge in answer that all is fair in war; but they seem to have regretted and repented their unprofitable barbarism, as no shell has been directed hitherward since the first day.

The Prussian cannonade goes on daily, and with such humdrum regularity, that we should miss it were it abruptly to cease. There is method and routine in the German's way of going to work. His programme of one day is observed punctually in the proceedings of the morrow, and it is more or less as follows:—In the morning, at very earliest dawn, the good Prussian fires off two or three of his heaviest guns. This is by way of a *reveille*, and simply *um die canonen ausblasen zu lassen*, to get rid of the evening's last charge, which may have got damp in the night. The artilleryman then peaceably lights his pipe, and boils his kettle for his morning coffee. A couple of hours more is employed in inquiring, musically, and on Professor Arndt's strain, 'What is the German's Fatherland?' to find out whether Holstein, Schleswig, and perhaps even Jutland, are not included within its shadowy boundaries. By-and-by, as the clock strikes ten, the corporal summons his men back from the land of dreams, and the work begins in

earnest. Then comes the time to awaken the hundred echoes of this sea-indented shore, and to make every pane of glass rattle in our windows. It is boom, boom, boom, just at the rate of about three discharges every five minutes. The air is, and has been since the game began, pure and lovely beyond all powers of description. It freezes hard in the night yet, but the days are long, and the sun is warm and vivid. Ineffable calmness has succeeded the three or four days' stormy gales that shook us so rudely last week. Such faint breeze as there is, is westerly, and every breath from the scene of action brings us the music of that heavy artillery lingering in the elastic air with a sweetness that no concert or chamber music can equal. Outside, in the fields, along the sea, in the woods, all is life, and quiet, and love. The lark soars up buoyant and gleeful, and is long audible after it has become invisible. There is a chirp in every bush, a carol on every hedge, though not a trace of green, hardly an opening bud or swelling catkin, is anywhere to be seen. The Spring teems everywhere in the lap of nature, afraid yet, though almost ready, to burst forth with all the concentrated strength of a Northern climate, compelled as it is to make up by rapid development for the shortness of its existence. In the midst of this still, yet strong, heaving of life all around us the sudden puff of

smoke bursting now from this and now from that cliff on the Broagerland coast, and the deep thunder following at more than a minute's interval upon every flash, nay, the very hissing, fizzing noise of the shells in the air seem scarcely to disharmonize with the loveliness of the happy scene, and strikes us almost as a mere play or spectacle got up to enhance its glorious beauty. We look on and listen in a perfect rapture of delight.

Presently the sun has reached the meridian, and the Prussian strikes work to attend to the great business of the day. There is peace and silence at meal times, and his noontide dinner, and his Vier-uhr-Brod. After eating he becomes torpid. The work of digestion puts him in good humour with the whole world. His pipe is relighted, and even if the cannon is reloaded, the fire is slack and lazy, the cannonier visibly yawning and even napping between one discharge and another.

The damage done hitherto to the Danish bastions is but trifling, and the casualties by no means heavy. The Danes make no attempt to answer the fire from Broagerland, as the enemy lies almost altogether beyond reach of their old-fashioned pieces: they rather turn their efforts

against the Avnbjerg and Dybböl village, to disturb, if possible, the work of the enemy, lodged there since the unlucky affair last Thursday. For, it would be vain to dissemble it, our present calmness and security may in the end prove to have been deceitful, and since Thursday our position seems to many less safe than it appeared before the terrible power of the Prussian artillery was fully tested. No one here doubts that the ground that was so lately lost at Avnbjerg and at the village of Dybböl will soon become the basis of operations for the enemy; and that batteries are at this present moment being hastily reared both upon those points and on the wooded crests of the Rageböl hills. Should the work be completed, as it doubtless will be, unless the Danes can venture on a desperate attempt to dislodge the enemy, the fire from those new approaches will have a far different effect from the mere semblance of a cannonade from Broagerland, which the Prussians keep up almost for the mere purpose of lulling their adversaries to sleep. The cannon from the cliffs at Broagerland has only to throw its projectiles about two-and-a-half English miles, to sweep over the whole line of Danish bastions from No. 1 to No. 10. It has only to aim at the windmills, the church, and the castle of Sönderborg, to shower its shells upon us within a mile-and-a-half range. Still even

these distances are a protection; but what will it be when the thunder shall roar against the Danish line from the Avnbjerg, placed as it is at only two-thirds of a mile from the Dybböl Hill batteries, or from Rageböl, which is nearly as close to them? Truly, it may be that so great a proximity may prove instrumental towards making the Danish smooth-bores a match for the Prussian rifled cannon; but the superiority of aim and strength will still tell in favour of the latter, and when the cannonade begins the Danes will have to hold their own by the utmost stretch of their heroic valour and endurance.

Most of the officers here, however, even while admitting the possibility of the Dybböl position being taken, contend that it would always be possible, and even easy, to defend the island for any length of time. For my own part, I wish with all my heart that the thing may be as they describe it, but it seems impossible to believe that, once in possession of the Dybböl heights, of Dybböl Windmill, and all that line, the enemy would be long detained by the batteries and the palisades of the *tête de pont*. From the heights of Dybböl Mill the Prussians would exchange shots with the church battery, the castle battery, and other works round about Sönderborg, at about three-quarters of an English mile's distance, and it is by no means impossible that they

may so sweep everything before them that no other obstacle should rise against their crossing over to the island than the 120 or 150 yards of the Sound spanned now by the two pontoon bridges. Those bridges, of course, would not be left for an enemy's accommodation; but the Germans might, perhaps, be at no great loss to replace them. What defence the Danes could offer on the island itself remains to be seen; but, in the event of their being overpowered, their retreat by sea could be easily assured. All the shipping was removed from the little harbour of Sönderborg, as I told you in my last letter, from the very first danger apprehended in consequence of the bombardment of Tuesday last. The port no less than the town is so utterly at the mercy of the Prussian artillery that even the mail steamer can no longer attempt to come in sight of land; but at the rear of Sönderborg, far away from the range of Prussian cannon, the Danes have a most magnificent harbour, called Hörup Hav, formed by a long fiord or inlet of the sea, somewhat more than eight English miles in length, and little less than one mile broad at its narrowest point, with a depth of more than 100 feet of water, vast enough and safe enough to harbour the whole of the Danish fleet. This fiord is formed by the southern shore of the isle of Alsen, and by the little Peninsula of Kainæs,

or Kegeness, as the Germans call it—a peninsula on the eastern side joined to the main port of the island by the narrowest, lowest slip of sandy land imaginable at Kainæs Fyr. The mouth of the hav, or haven, opens to the west, and is very nearly opposite to the mouth of the Vemmingbund and the coast of the Broagerland, but it lies at no less than four English miles' distance from the latter, consequently beyond reach even of the formidable Prussian artillery.

I rode out yesterday for the first time to see this wonderfully beautiful sheet of water, which seems fitted by nature to become one of the best naval establishments in the world. I saw a very brisk stir of men and things at the spot more properly called Hörup Hav, the place where two or three excellent piers, some of them lately constructed, enable the steamers to load and unload with the greatest ease and rapidity. A throng of carriages and waggons conveying fugitives from doomed Sönderborg and their goods and chattels encumbered the quays and all the roads, lanes, and openings leading to them. They were all making off, some to friendly houses in Fünen or Zealand, others any whither, with no proper object or destination, only anxious to be away. If the supreme hour is to come and the ground

at Dybböl and Sönderborg to be fought for inch by inch, it is just as well that the army should be rid of all the encumbrance of non-combatants. The worst of it is, however, that only the craven, the selfish, the persons in good health, and with plenty of means at command, join in this harum-scarum exodus. A great many are left behind, some in the sheer impossibility, some from stubborn unwillingness, to quit the spot. I have taken up my quarters in a private house, as there is danger of the Reymuth Hôtel being basely broken up and deserted, and I am living alone with an old woman and her maid-servant. My landlady is the *sage femme* of the place. She must be a good as well as a wise woman, to judge from appearance and to apply the test of the old inn-signs which represent such a personage without a head; for her forehead recedes so frightfully from the eyebrows, that she seems to have no head at all. Well, this good old soul and her maid seem to think as little of shells and grenades as a wire-masked pierrot or harlequin at Milan or Naples of the sugar plums with which he is pelted at the Corso. Where women show so heroic a contempt of danger should I be the one to turn tail?

It is astonishing, also, to see how, in the midst

of all this din of war, which certainly threatens Sönderborg and its environs with utter destruction, and is possibly fraught with grave calamities and final ruin to the State of Denmark, the routine of life goes on, undisturbed and placid, not from mere dogged stubbornness and the resolution of despair, but from mere habit and dull sloth and apathy, concentrating its attention upon the task immediately on hand, driving off all thought of impending danger and putting off the evil day with the instinctive aversion to change which is characteristic of the human mind in the common run. We have all seen a dog lying lazily in the sun upon a thronged thoroughfare, apparently so soundly asleep as to be deaf to the thundering voice and cracking whip of the driver, who would rather not crush the poor brute. But only wait till the very horse's hoof almost brushes the shaggy coat of the rash sleeper, and up he will be and out of harm's way in the twinkling of an eye, soon to lie down again in as dangerous a spot, with the like improvidence, and to escape as imminent a danger with the same nimbleness and presence of mind. Not otherwise these poor curs of the lower classes of Sönderborg. Shells fell among them on Thursday last, and great was their uproar and flurry and hurry-scurry. But the cannon turned its mouth elsewhere, and they

slunk back to their kennels, and there they stick, tinkering, cobbling, peddling, cooking, washing, and doing what they had to do, heedless of the day (which may be to-morrow or this very afternoon) when shells shall shower down again among them as thick as hail, when their mean hovels shall crumble about their ears, and when they shall scamper away heads over heels, and heels over heads, howling and yelping, unable to take care of themselves at the twelfth hour, as they were to exercise their judgment and foresight at the eleventh.

A fine and large battalion of the King's Foot Guards, with their bearskins and in their long and rough overcoats, have just this moment come in from Copenhagen. The supreme conflict that *seems* imminent will probably give them enough to do. I have walked along their whole line as they stood mustered up on the main street of the town, with their band of musicians at their head. They may be about 1,000 men, and better soldiers as to bulk, mien, bearing, and real physical strength I do not believe can be seen even among the crack regiments of the Queen's Household brigade. Indeed, I think they 'beat the whole world' as to mere show, and I have no

doubt the substance will, on a trial, be found to correspond with the appearance.

I went out to Dybböl yesterday, 21st, and made the tour of the whole Danish position. The sluggish cannonade was going on all the time, as it does daily from ten to three or four, with an occasional shot at all hours of morning, noon, and night. A villanous shell, hissing like a serpent, made straight for the spot where I stood, near the Dybböl Windmill, and burst at something less than a hundred yards' distance. But, somehow, military as well as civilians are treating such missiles with that familiarity which breeds contempt. Some thousands, between balls and shells, have already been thrown from the other side, and nothing, or next to nothing, comes of it. As it was said of the Cardinal's terrible curse in the legend of the Jackdaw of Rheims, 'nobody seems one penny the worse.' All the fire, as yet, comes from the batteries in Broagerland, and, with the exception of a few random shots aimed here and there at the mill or the barracks of the encampment close to it, all the efforts of the Prussians have been turned against Battery No. 2, which, together with No. 1, are on the extreme left of the Danish position on the shore of the Vemmingbund, which constituted the vul-

nerable side of the whole line, and upon which the storming parties could hope to make their way if the cannonade was at any time to be followed by an assault. Well, we deemed it our duty to go and inspect this much belaboured Battery or Bastion No. 2. We were there for half-an-hour yesterday, and leisurely took in all the havoc and damage that more than 300 or 400 shots have hitherto wrought; but all that can be said is, there is a good deal of life in the old earthwork yet; a gabion or two in the parapets may be blown into air from time to time, a cannon or two may be dismounted in the course of the day, but all the mischief is repaired as soon as it is done; the morning sees the bastion in as thoroughly good a state of defence as if nothing had ever gone wrong, and the game could at this rate be kept up till the King of Prussia has seen as many birthdays as Methuselah. The blockhouse is, in good sooth, in a sad plight. It was not so constructed as to withstand the weight of the projectiles which the enemy had it in their power to hurl against it. Indeed, the only serious calamity, the only heavy loss inflicted by all this noisy bombardment, occurred inside of it, when a shell burst among the men and officers pent up in it. But since that disaster the unsafe roof shelters nobody, and the fury of the Prussian artillery is spent upon a

mere empty ruin. The soldiers for the last two or three days line their parapets; they watch their enemy and his doings, talk, drink, eat their bread and butter, and at every puff of smoke they fall back behind the shelter of their solid earth-mounds, and the iron hail either passes over their heads quite harmless, or any harm it does affords them wholesome occupation and pleasurable excitement for the next hour or two.

These heavy-looking Danes are not without their bit of humour after all. A party of jolly dragoons lodged at a half-ruined farmhouse on the road between the bridge and the Dybböl Mill, have set up some huge guys, or men of straw, whom they designate as Marshal Wrangel, Prince Frederic Charles, or any other great personage in the enemy's camp, and they treat them to Katzen music by the hour. On the bastions, also, they set up puppets in Danish uniform on the most exposed part of the breastwork, and when the Prussian sharpshooters spend all the fury of their fire against these lay figures, the Danes set up shouts of laughter that may be heard all the way to Broagerland.

A rumour spread about last evening, 22nd, of the King of Denmark having unexpectedly landed at Hörup Hav. As I walked out to ascertain

the correctness of the intelligence, I met on the high street a convoy of five or six country carriages, in the foremost of which sat his Majesty Christian IX., with the Commander-in-Chief, General Gerlach, while the other vehicles were occupied by the Minister of War, Colonel Lundbye, and persons in the King's suite. The reappearance of the Danish Monarch at head-quarters, after an absence of more than eight weeks, created no little surprise among the soldiers and the townspeople, and surmises were soon rife as to the possibility that the Government at Copenhagen might finally have yielded to the pressure of foreign diplomacy, and consented to a temporary suspension of hostilities, as they had already acceded to the proposed Conference. The bare possibility of an armistice had a very disheartening effect upon the army, though some of the officers are rational enough to admit that Conference without armistice is scarcely possible, and that were it even possible, it would not be advantageous to the Danish army, upon whom the thought that the shedding of their blood could have but little or no weight on the settlement of a question referred to the arbitrament of peaceful negotiators, could hardly fail to exercise a depressing and even to some extent demoralizing influence. The Danes are here in the condition of a prizefighter who stands

his ground against an adversary of incomparably superior strength, and keeps up the unequal struggle by sheer pluck and dogged resolution. Were too long an interval to occur between the heats, the smart of his hurts and bruises might bring on exhaustion and faintness, and it might become more and more difficult to bring him up to time. It would not be wise to allow the blood even of the long-enduring Dane time to cool, and as such would unavoidably be the effect of a spell of inactive days, the armistice would necessarily be extremely unpopular. It was to reconcile the army to this bitter necessity, it was supposed, that the King made his entrance into Sönderborg last evening. 'The announcement of the unwelcome news,' it was said, 'would come with a better grace if made by him in a proclamation to the effect that he had been unable to resist the importunities of his allies, but that his mind was no less unshaken as to upholding every tittle of the rights of Denmark, and that if no clue to the Schleswig-Holstein puzzle could be found by diplomacy, he would always rely on the stout valour of his soldiers to cut that knot with the sword.' An assurance of that nature, added to the august presence of the Sovereign, and a few gracious words spoken to the most deserving among the men and officers, might, it was urged, 'gild the pill which must

needs be swallowed.' This armistice and the Conference have been the Damocles' sword, hanging for ever so many days above the head of the brave Danish army, and it was at last somewhat extensively believed that the King's arrival announced its fall.

These apprehensions were soon proved to have been unfounded. The Prussian cannonade, which had been by no means brisk in the morning, had ceased altogether at two in the afternoon, a circumstance which strengthened the worst conjectures of the believers in an armistice, as they suspected the same news of which they fancied their King to be the bearer, might have reached the allied camp precisely at the same time. The King, however, did not tarry at Sönderborg one moment, but, together with General Gerlach seated on his left side, and with all the other ramshackle vehicles conveying his suite, he crossed the bridge between ten and eleven in the evening, and went to visit the Dybböl bastions and the troops at outposts. Not a shot had been fired during the whole afternoon and evening, as far as my own observation went, since two o'clock P.M.; according to the version of other persons, since four. Yet we are assured one random shell fell and burst at no great distance

from the King's carriage, in the vicinity of Bastion No. 2. His Majesty came back from his inspection late in the night, and went to his floating palace, the Schleswig steamer, moored at Hörup Hav.

The King will leave Sönderborg and Hörup Hav to-morrow morning, the 24th. His only object, besides visiting the forts and outposts, was to see the sick and wounded at the hopitals. I met His Majesty twice to-day;—first, on the main street at Augustenborg, whither I had myself gone to see the inmates of the 'Lazaret,' as the Royal palace or Slot, now entirely devoted to the accommodation of military sufferers, is called. The second meeting was on the Ulkeböl road, whence the King was on his way to his floating quarters at Hörup Hav. The King has not his horses here, and moves about in one of the country carriages, or rather waggons, a conveyance in the style of the German *char-à-bancs*, a heavy, clumsy, jolting concern. He is to be seen on foot everywhere, however, followed by his numerous, but by no means brilliant, retinue. Later in the afternoon he had evidently left town on foot by the Ulkeböl Gate, inspecting, as he went, the wooden barracks built for the accom-

modation of the soldiers amongst the windmills crowning the heights upon which this part of the town is placed. The road is at every step crowded with marching detachments of troops, trotting officers, galloping orderlies, and a never-ending train of army and country waggons, so it is difficult for any man to make very rapid progress, except at rare intervals. The appearance of Royalty, of course, compels every horse and carriage to pull up, and it is customary here for all persons on horseback, and especially for mounted officers, to alight, on the slightest hint on the part of His Majesty to address them. The number of persons thus honoured by Christian IX.'s notice was pretty considerable. He is evidently bent on winning the hearts of his subjects, and he thinks, apparently, that no show of kindness and graciousness to the officers of his army is more than is due to them to repay them for the toils and hardships they have had for the last three months to endure for his sake and for that of their country. No countenance the King has ever seen once in his life seems to escape his prompt recognition, and as he talks to them he shows himself perfectly familiar with every particular connected with themselves, their families, their views and interests, and those of the subalterns under their command. He has a right royal memory. I stood for a long time at a little

distance from him, and I could, without indiscretion, notice his manners, and hear and partly understand his words. In the elementary arts of kingcraft, in those which belong to the minor morals of his station, he is perfectly at home. Those of his subjects who come within the reach of his fascination, I should think will not easily rank with 'His Majesty's Opposition.' He has a winning smile, a fair and benevolent countenance, not by any means deficient in shrewdness and intelligence. He is not much above the middle size; his figure is rather slender and truly elegant; his bearing is that of a private gentleman, at least, I could not detect much of the grandeur and stateliness that the vulgar are apt to associate with the outward look of royalty. He wore the uniform of a general officer of the highest rank—a long overcoat with shoulder-straps and a foraging cap, the common garb of most officers in campaign, simple, but scrupulously clean and tidy, distinguished by the most accurate cut and exquisite fit. The King's features are good, fine, and regular, the face rather sharp and lean, the complexion fair and clear; the eyes, so far as I could see at a little distance (which was a great one for a near-sighted person like me), light blue; the hair seemed chestnut, the moustaches and whiskers, which are rather bushy, of a dark brown. I am told the King is about forty-six;

were I to judge from appearances, I should have thought him at least ten years younger.

Parents and guardians anxious to train their children and wards in the pursuit of the arts of peace should take good care to keep them away from scenes like these. With all the drawbacks of whizzing balls and hissing shells, and crowded churchyards, and ambulance stretchers put out in the sun to dry the blood with which the wounded have stained them, there is something incredibly fascinating in the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious war. Even at my time of life, when weariness of limb and depression of spirits rob life of the zest of its keenest enjoyments, I can hardly ride through the thick of one of these stout Danish battalions, beset on all sides by their bristling bayonets, without a feeling of exultation. The air of cheerful resolution with which mere peasants go out to be shot at for a penny or sixpence a day, the firmness of their heavy tread, the glance of the eye, the secure mien, which dignify them into real warriors in spite of their somewhat clumsy gait and ungainly bearing, revealing their recent rustic derivation, their look of endurance, their uncouth but inspiriting martial airs, their cheers and shouts, enlist my sympathies till the temptation to evince them by

sharing their toils and dangers becomes at moments perfectly irresistible. Something good and holy there must be in a cause for which these men are so lavish of their lowly, harmless, but, to them and theirs, by no means valueless life, and you feel that that cause might be beautiful enough for you to venture your own. A man's heart's blood is better ventured in behalf of old Denmark than his neck in a steeplechase. Besides, there is a power of attraction in a mere mass of men. It lifts you, it carries you along with it, and no one can understand the feelings of the Greeks, who qualified all study as 'school,' *i. e.* idleness, making war alone the real business of man. I went out last evening between ten and eleven, to see the bastions of Dybböl lighted up by the moon. The night was bright and clear, the air keen but calm, and the flood of silver light paled the stars in the heavens, so that scarcely the vivid luminaries of Sirius and Orion's belt were visible, just as they were about to dip in the western horizon. The watch-fires were lit at the Danish camp near the mill, at the various forts, and at the back of Sönderborg, where the cavalry and part of the artillery had pitched their tents; but a more conspicuous glare rose on my left in the direction of Broagerland, where a house, set on fire by the Prussian shells, was slowly burning to the ground. The road I tra-

velled was deserted; the fields were solitary, the great mass of the Danish battalions were sleeping in their wooden barracks. But here and there along the road, and as I went beyond the windmill to the outposts, pickets were stationed, and patrols were sauntering up and down, unwearied in their watch, unremitting in their duties. Their eyes, fresh and steady, seemed proof against any amount of unrest; the consciousness of all the responsibility of their position as guardians of their comrades' slumbers, and guarantees for the security of the army, beamed from their countenances. In the forts, the repair of the damage done in the daytime by the enemy's fire was going on briskly but silently all night.

As soon as a cannonade and bombardment cease to strike terror, they afford an inexhaustible fund of amusement. Not only has Sönderborg recovered the panic into which the first shower of shells had thrown it, but it has learned to slumber sweetly to the music of the Prussian guns. A few of the smaller fishing craft have come back to their moorings, and I saw on Wednesday a steamer making straight for the harbour, with her Dannebrog waving defiance to the batteries, which could have sunk her in a few seconds from the shore of the Vemmingbund.

A number of English amateurs are daily flocking upon us, all of them bent upon evincing their sovereign contempt of what are called the perils of war. Sentries are posted at the end of the bridges on the Sönderborg side to prevent civilians crossing over to Dybböl unless provided with a pass from headquarters. The officers of the staff are, however, liberal to a fault, and they hardly ever dream of refusing a card to any person, especially to an Englishman, applying for it. Armed with that talisman, our fun-loving tourists walk up to the windmill, rummage about from fort to fort, jump upon parapets, crouch under blockhouses, stand on the glacis, seeking the most advantageous position to view the exchange of iron projectiles—as eager for the sport as if it were a game of cricket or football. The recklessness of their daring and the oddity of their travelling costume puzzle the officers, and afford unspeakable amusement to the men. One of these strangers, a youth of noble blood and mien, fresh from Oxford, clad in a sort of buff leather *cap-à-pie*, has been nicknamed Robinson Crusoe, and his indivisible companion, a stalwart fellow, 'up to anything,' goes, of course, by the name of his man Friday. The officers at headquarters, men of sterling bravery, though too ready to oblige England and the English to deny these gentlemen the gratification of getting them-

selves knocked on the head if they are so minded, are at a loss to understand the foolhardiness which makes these sons of Albion court danger merely for danger's sake. They never themselves (the Danes) shrink from any trial of their mettle when it comes to them in the way of business; but when not on duty they find no peculiar delight in watching and dodging 24-pound balls. Life has sufficient charm for them without enhancing its zest by unnecessarily staking it on the mere cast of a die. Indeed, did they not hold it at its full value, they would deem it a less worthy sacrifice to be laid down whenever duty to their flag and love of their country demanded it. The pleasure derivable from the chances of breaking one's neck in a steeplechase or in the ascent of a snow-peak, is peculiarly English. Foreign nations may envy, and can easily understand it; for the display of strength and skill in horsemanship, and of nerve and endurance in mountain climbing, has something in it to flatter the conscious pride of the possessor of similar gifts; but the mere ducking under a shell for the satisfaction of being able to say that one has been 'under fire,' or perhaps of exhibiting the skirt of one's coat or the knee of one's nether garment which a fragment of one of such missiles has bespattered with mud, baffles these noble Danes' comprehension, and gives them no very exalted idea of English

sense, whatever estimate they may form of English heroism. There was a mere boy of seventeen the other day, who had perched himself on the very top of the Dybböl Windmill to 'see the fun,' and no entreaty or expostulation could induce him to alight from his elevated station, 'the sight was so exciting!'

I have just heard of two more young Englishmen who are coming to keep us company here. They are, we are told, travelling through Zealand and Fünen on velocipedes!

Next to the joy of encountering danger must be man's innate desire to have a hand in, or at least a peep at, the work of destruction. I was awakened yesterday at daybreak by the noise of the house next to the one I live in being pulled down to the ground. The Engineer Corps have decreed the downfall of about a score of tenements lying in the way of the new transversal street, which is to open a broad avenue from the main street of the town, near the Raadhuus or Town-hall, down to the sea in the immediate neighbourhood of the bridges. The necessity of providing every means for the movements of the troops in the event of a rapid advance or retreat

no doubt justified this measure, and Sönderborg, like Paris, will, at some future day, have reason to thank the absolute will which comes to throw daylight through the maze of its narrow, crooked, poky thoroughfares. The breaking up of homes, however homely, is always a melancholy sight, nevertheless; especially if the fiat of demolition comes suddenly upon those whose dwellings are doomed. The hustling together of dear, however mean, furniture; the tottering steps of old people, spirited away from those walls which had probably witnessed their birth, and in which they had reckoned to draw their last breath undisturbed; the wandering forth of women and infants, uncertain where to lay their heads for the night; the tearing open of the *sanctum sanctorum* of domestic privacy, the laying bare of the 'skeleton closet,' of a household, those crumbling walls, those tattered hangings, those riven chimneys and desecrated hearths—all that miserable wreck of gutted human habitations has something unutterably painful and heartrending in it, to which even the magnificent prospects of a Rue Rivoli or of a Boulevard Sebastopol cannot easily reconcile a feeling being. Yet for those not immediately concerned, this work of demolition seems to have a savage pleasure of some sort. The Danish soldiers, the best-natured men in the world, when plying their crowbars and pickaxes under the

direction of the Engineer Corps, go to work with a will, a glee, and an earnestness which they hardly ever exhibit in the making of those trenches which are to screen their breasts from the enemy's bullets, or even in the construction of those wooden huts which are to temper the rigour of their winter nights when camping out; and the population of the neighbourhood, happy to see the havoc which strikes down their neighbours and spares themselves, gather round in crowds, the men smoking their pipes in grim delight, the women gaping and giggling, the urchins clapping their hands and hurrahing, as roof follows roof, and floor falls upon floor, occasionally commenting on the tawdry finery or the abject misery that the unsparing hand of the spoiler brings to light.

Whenever I choose to bear myself away from melancholy scenes of this nature, I have only to take a short walk or ride to find myself in a very different scene. The whole tenour of rural life is here calculated to afford the most thorough and immediate relief. Certainly the scourge of war never struck a population more clearly and justly entitled to exemption from its horrors than when it came to afflict these good districts of Alsen and

of the adjoining mainland. There is hardly a house, from the loftiest mansion to the lowliest cabin, the door of which is not hospitably open to the passer-by, and there is hardly an open door which I have any hesitation to enter by; there is no fear of intrusion. I am especially fond of coming down upon the parsons. It has become as natural for these reverend gentlemen to see me step upon their threshold and sit down at their tables, as if I had been an inmate of their houses for years. Nor is their hospitable welcome limited to my person alone, but my English friends, whom I often bring with me, are received with the same cordial benevolence as if they really came on any plausible errand, or had any other business there besides the gratification of an idle curiosity. Not a shade of surprise is ever exhibited at any number of visitors, at any unseasonableness of the hour; no inquisitiveness as to the possible object of the call. To come all the way from Pall-mall or Cornhill to lunch with a Danish 'Prediger,' seems to the spreader of the feast the most natural thing in the world. I have already entertained the reader with an account of the blessings which Heaven has showered on the parish priest of Tandslet. There is another splendid fellow of that cloth, the clergyman of a thriving village about an English mile to the north-east of this place, upon whom I popped about a month ago, with

the free and easy manner of a knight-errant mistaking an inn for a castle, or a castle for an inn, and with whom I have been on terms of the most hearty friendship ever since. Gracious! what a load of earthly felicity has Providence heaped upon that worthy Minister of the Gospel! What a suite of snug, warm, comfortably-furnished, and elegantly-decorated apartments hide behind that long row of small and low, but cheerfully sunny windows under that high and heavy thatched roof! What a nice choice of well-bound books, what a complete litter of newspapers, what a luxury of crackling fire, what a genial, pure, fragrant atmosphere in that delightful library! What a maze of shady walks in that park, what a wilderness of flowers in those beds, what a luxuriancy of creeping plants on the old walls! What a multitude of nests for rooks, starlings, and other long-expected summer guests on those tall lime trees! What a glorious look-out from that summer-house upon the mirror-like surface of the Augustenborg Fiord! What a larder and kitchen, what melodious lowing from that steaming cow-house, what neatness and freshness in that dairy, what superb colts trotted out for my edification out of that well-filled stable! What earthly paradise is there to be compared with a Danish Prestegaard? What wealth of soil can compete with the glebe of the worthy labourer in the Lord's vineyard? At

the same time, what man, be he either clerk or layman, better deserves Heaven's favour than this same excellent Pastor Krog Meyer? Wealthy as he is now, men recall the time when he was far richer, and brought himself to the brink of ruin by his deeds of charity and hospitality performed in the service of men and officers at the time when the Danish army was quartered in this same district of Dybböl and Als, confronting the forces of the Germans during the Schleswig-Holstein war of 1849. He had been a chaplain or tutor in the house of the Duke of Augustenborg, father of the present Prince Pretendant, and was still his friend in 1848, at the time that the Duke rose in arms against his legitimate sovereign, the King of Denmark, and headed the rebellion of the Schleswig-Holsteiners. The good parson showed me letters of the Duke, in which the latter thanked his ex-chaplain, who strove to dissuade him from a step which, besides being blamable in itself, was also likely to be fraught with serious consequences to the Duke himself and his family. The Duke thanked the chaplain for his good advice, and, of course, followed his own mind. The parsons throughout North and Middle Schleswig have at all times shown themselves loyal and patriotic even to heroism, and have been roughly-handled by the anti-Danish party accordingly. However heavily Herr Meyer may have suffered

at the above-mentioned juncture, he seems not a bit the worse for it at the present moment. He may be fifty or any number of years old, but there is no trace of decline in that massive square face, in that sturdy frame, in that loud joyous humour, in that deep stentorian voice. He may have to dine alone with his wife and sister—the whole of his household; but he always sits at a table large enough and always laid out for a score of guests. Come ten or come twenty strangers at the very pinch of a minute, and they are as readily cared for as if they had been expected for a week. The parson brings forth no choice wines, no costly viands; all is plain with him—frugal, yet plentiful. If you do not disdain his home-cured 'speck,' his peasoup, and rye pudding, you can nowhere fare better than here; luxury or ostentation you must seek elsewhere; and if what you look for in a fellow-being is sterling worth, you will depart after a few hours spent at the Ulkebol Parsonage in better humour with yourself and with the whole of your species. A third friend I have made in later times at the parsonage at Hörup, where the parish priest is a tall, dignified man, well stricken in years, and slightly, almost imperceptibly, affected by paralysis. The effect of his fine, benevolent countenance in the pulpit, must, I should think, be enhanced by the fitful head, and the trembling voice of his inci-

pient infirmity. His two daughters are everything that may be called pretty; but it is an almost universal remark of mine, that in every house I ever go in about this darling Isle of Als, I am sure to find either a woman or girl decidedly good-looking. It is no matter whether the house be high or low, whether the beauty is to come out of the parlour or the kitchen; it is sure to be there, whether you look for it or not, and this, let me tell you, is not a peculiarity likely to indispose a stranger against the country he is visiting. Nor will you be less delighted, after having done with the parson, if you try your luck with any of his parishioners, whether your chance brings you to the comforts and refinements of Farmer Rosen's grange at Rönhave, or to the Ladegaard at Herr Petersen's, or at Miang at Herr Rasmussen's, a mere Bauer, but a wealthy one, or finally, even if you call upon Hansen, an old peasant in humbler circumstances, at Kjær Westermark. Fear of any lack of communication by the means of a common language need hardly deter you. By hook or by crook, every Dane seems always to have picked up some scrap of foreign tongue to be used for your benefit. After Hansen has put on a blank look at all the German you endeavour to flourish in his face, he surprises you by stammering out a few words of very uncouth but unmistakable French. His wife and chil-

dren may not be equally ready with their tongue, but they are pleased to see you, and smile their welcome. The only bane of their otherwise too happy life is loneliness. Break through it, and you stand before them in the light of a benefactor. Your appearance is an event, and your look, your dress and address, the words they understand and those they do not, will be food for their mind and a topic for their talk for weeks. Drop them your card, or write your name in their books, and your pasteboard or handwriting will be a relic for the house as long as it stands. Benevolence to the whole human race seems to be the instinct of these unsophisticated people. No one seems capable of doing or receiving harm. I have not seen a weapon in any of the hundred houses I have entered, not a rusty old firelock hanging as a trophy on the chimneypiece, not a sporting gun even in any of the kitchen corners. The dog tied on the straw in the stable-yard is no less a friend than his master. Tramps and beggars he never sees, and knows not how to bark. He rolls and writhes, whining in his litter, wagging his tail, and inviting your caress by every unmistakable expression of his dumb language. It is upon such a people that about 18,000 of their country's soldiers are now billeted; it is upon them that, unless God help Denmark, as many or more foreign invaders may

at no distant time be quartered. Heaven save them!

I have so often croaked and grumbled about the dull wretchedness of our existence at this place, that I think it right to notice the great improvement that these later days have brought about in our position. In the first place, the weather has been delightful,—bright, dry, and by no means colder than we should have it in England at this time of the year. Then we have daily additions to our numbers, and it is clearly a case of 'the more the merrier.' Besides seven or eight quill-drivers, representing the Press of most European nations, we have curious travellers in flocks, chiefly English officers, whose first instinct prompts them to seek intercourse and communion with us civilians. Some half-score of us are always clubbing together, and our after-dinner talk, enlivened by quips and cranks disguised under the motley garb of a polyglot jargon, racy and spicy with the peculiarities of national character, helps us to while away the dreary hours which had hitherto hung so heavily upon us. Attic salt from the Boulevards mixes not inaptly with Cornhill chaff. Friendship springs up at the shortest notice, and the good-humour and cordiality inseparable from camp life readily

extend to the wretched inns where we are *comme à la guerre.* The soldiers are used to our visits at all hours; they greet us with 'God dag' or 'God nat,' or only whisper with great unconcern among themselves that 'Englanderne,' or 'Engelskmændene' are coming. All that is odd, rash, impudent, or importunate is set down as pure English idiosyncrasy. No amount of impatience on our part has power to ruffle their unconquerable Northern temper. The officers are all invariably courteous and obliging, withhold no information, shun no conversation into which we may choose to enter. I never saw an epauletted Dane who was not every inch a gentleman, and, as I said before, never fell in with a cross, a rough, or crusty, or ill-behaved soldier. One drunken fellow I certainly chanced to meet on the very main street of Sönderborg, on Sunday last. He was the very first man I saw in that plight. But it was an exception, only proving the rule; and the manner in which his comrades pushed and shoved him along, Helot like, with scorn and wrath in their countenances, showed that intoxication is as unpopular among them as among the Spartans of old. These Danes are certainly pleased to see us share their toils and, to some extent, their dangers. They look at us, as we trudge along with them in the mud, with a wondering gaze, as if plainly asking how we like it,

and if we are at times caught inside their forts when a shell comes rattling in the air, the cry is, *Dekke! Dekke!* they lay hold of us, laughing, bidding us duck and crouch in the most approved fashion, and drag us into the holes and corners, where experience has taught them the projectile may be awaited with almost perfect impunity. At no hour of the day or night can one feel quite sure of visiting the bastions without coming in for a share of the stupid fire of the Prussians. The morning up to ten or eleven o'clock, and the night from about four or five P.M. till daybreak, are the periods of comparative repose, and we time our excursions accordingly; but still the Broagerland batteries may be said never to be absolutely at rest at any hour of the day or night. An occasional shot comes through the air almost as regularly as the toll of a church-clock bell striking the hour. Whenever this happens in the still night the effect is sublime. The loud deep boom of the heavy piece reproduced through the air by the echoes of the hilly land and craggy seacoast, the whizzing and fizzing, or, more properly, whirring and fluttering of the shell as it rattles on its path, snake-like, meteor-like—all this makes up a treat for the eye and ear which the most consummate pyrotechnic art can scarcely rival, and well worth the trouble and the very little risk it may cost us to enjoy it.

Such are the pains and pleasures, the joys and sorrows, the advantages and drawbacks, of our existence. Weigh the *pro* and *con.*, and then let me ask, 'Who would not be a Correspondent?'

If the modern art of war consists in inflicting the greatest possible injury upon an enemy with the least possible waste of time, blood, and money, then one may be permitted to doubt whether the Prussians have attained any very high degree of proficiency in the craft; and if war is still to be, as it was among savages, merely the art of killing men, even then the Prussians may be looked upon as mere bunglers in its pursuit. It is now no less than a fortnight (from the 14th inst.) since they opened fire from their batteries on the cliffs of the Broagerland. The cannonade has never entirely ceased throughout the whole of a day or night. No less than 500 or 600 shots and shells have been fired on an average daily; 7,500 of such missiles, on the very lowest computation, have been thrown upon the Dybböl bastions, yet it may be doubted whether as many as seventy-five Danish men or officers have been disabled by the cannon since all the noise and earthquake began. The Prussians are thus purchasing their enemies' lives at the expense of about 500 shots per head, and I have already had occasion to state

in a previous letter the fact that 1,000 balls and shells on Wednesday last had not produced a single scratch or bruise to reward the artilleryman for his trouble. The average of casualties in the Danish forts hardly exceeds three or four men *hors de combat* daily.

As to any other results attained by the Prussians with all the thunder of their artillery, we may fairly set them down at *nil*. They kick up a prodigious deal of dust, doubtless; they have almost levelled with the ground one or two of the flimsily-constructed blockhouses, and the traverses and parapets are considerably scarred and furrowed in some of the forts. But what of it? We go out in the evening, and find a good deal of havoc and confusion in No. 2 or No. 6. The wooden gear of one or two of the guns is being removed in splinters. What of it? We revisit the same spot in the morning, and all the rubbish is cleared away, new gabions line the parapets, the battery is as good as new, the Danes rub their hands and shake the dust from their long overcoats, waiting for the daily shower of shot and shell, which they have learnt to dodge with consummate skill, and at which they can afford to laugh. At this present rate there is no reason why the siege of Dybböl should not last as many years as the siege of Troy.

Symptoms of a far greater activity began, how-

ever, to develop themselves yesterday on the German side. The fire between eleven and one o'clock was very brisk; the aim, no one can deny, is excellent, and if the cannonade were kept up for the whole of the twenty-four hours, or at least from sunrise to sunset, if it extended to the whole line, and if the attack were brought nearer to the bastions, we might probably have a different tale to tell. A new battery, of sixteen pieces, was yesterday unmasked by the Prussians on a vantage ground between the village of Dybböl and Rageböl, opposite to Battery No. 8. Possibly we shall have some thunder to-day on that quarter. But it must not be forgotten that all the Danish bastions, with the exception of Nos. 2 and 6, are altogether intact. Those two, as I have said, have received no injury that is not repaired almost as soon as inflicted. Up to this time the Danes have been marvellously chary of their ammunition. They hardly ever answer more than one to three of the enemy's shots. Perhaps they wait till the greater proximity neutralizes the advantage of the Prussian rifled artillery,—perhaps they disdain to waste powder and shot against mere inert matter, and will not bestir themselves till they can point their cannon at the breasts of their assailants. Were the Prussians as familiar with the sort of men they will have to meet in the breach as nearly two months' contact with them

has made me, they might well be excused if they shrank from coming to close quarters with them. There are not in the world more robust frames or more resolute countenances than those of these gentle, inoffensive, and, on the whole, untrained and uncouth Danish soldiers. Such thick-set limbs, such round high chests, such square shoulders, such high cheek-bones, such massive nether jaws, such firm flesh, such fresh blood, I scarcely ever thought could be the common characteristic of a whole host. I pass them in review daily as they go in and out from outposts to night quarters, and from night quarters to outposts. I view them in the mass, and scan them one by one with all the love of a professed physiognomist, and I assure you I look in vain for one individual whom I could feel disposed to describe as a weakling or a craven. The movements of these heavy bodies are generally slow and deliberate, the gait is clumsy and awkward, the expression of the faces dull and sedate; but in the mass their array is wall-like, the mere weight of their tread appalling. On an open ground, and breast to breast, I am really at a loss to say how many Prussians it may take to make them budge an inch. We have new arrivals daily. The Danish Government strain every nerve to send in their reserve. 5,000 recruits are being drilled at Copenhagen.

CHAPTER II.

THE ATTACK ON DYBBÖL.

Early Awakening.—Attack on the Bastions.—The Danes across the Bridge.—The Rolf Krake.—Foreign Tourists.—Mr. Herbert.—A Night Scene in Sönderborg.—Peace in the Midst of War.

March 18–*April* 1.

To-day, 28th, we have had serious work at last, and we are fully repaid for the many weeks of weary inaction and baffled expectation. The Prussians have attempted to storm the whole Dybböl line, and have been fully repulsed; so completely foiled and worsted, indeed, that it is questionable whether they will renew their attack for some time to come. Three such days as this would go far to establish the impregnable strength of the Dybböl line, and compel the Germans to give up the siege as the very worst of jobs.

I was awakened this morning, at about three o'clock, by the heavy report of a cannon shot. I did not mind it at the moment, for I knew the Prussians are wont to send up that thundering noise to Heaven by way of a morning prayer, and I thought there would be no more shots till

the cannonade was taken up in good earnest long after breakfast-time; such being the tenour of life to which the besiegers have accustomed us for these last two weeks. Presently, however, I heard a sharper sound, which at first might be mistaken for the rolling of a rough country cart on the uneven street pavement, but which, I was soon convinced, was the rattle of a well-sustained fire of musketry. It did not take me many minutes to rush out into the street and down to the bridges. The fusillade was the very briskest I had ever heard. There were no platoon volleys, but a steady *feu de bataille*, telling plainly of a general, hasty, and somewhat disorderly engagement. The Prussian batteries on Broagerland were perfectly silent. The cannonade this time came from the Danish bastions, from almost every point on the Dybböl line. I perceived at a glance that the Prussians had attempted to surprise and storm some of the bastions, and that, having their men in advance, they found it impossible to fire without danger to them. My surmises proved to be correct; the Prussians had, in fact, made their appearance first before Bastion No. 6, then at a point between Nos. 8 and 9, and finally all along the line.

The position of Dybböl is, perhaps, the very best conceivable for a neutral spectator. Nothing easier than to view the action from several points

without running the slightest risk. On reaching the bridge, my first instinct was to cross over to the Dybböl side, and go at once to the front. But I reflected that my business was not to take part in the battle, but merely to describe it, and that any needless venture of life or limb might rather hinder than help me in the discharge of my peculiar duty. With deliberate discretion, therefore, I made a *demi-tour* to the left, and my first steps were directed to the so-called 'Castle Battery,' or more properly, South-windmill battery, a high ground, topped by a windmill, and now converted into a bastion, on the Alsen shore, a quarter of a mile from Sönderborg, on the south-western side, from which I had a magnificent view of the Vemmingbund, and of the Dybböl heights, now flashing with fire all along the crest, like a marshy ground in a Southern climate all alive with swarms of fireflies.

It was not more than half-past three. It was one of the loveliest mornings I ever saw here. The air was perfectly still, and the larks were soaring up into heaven with their sweet morning hymn. The moon was far down on the western horizon, with a morning planet in her suite, which I think must have been Mercury. The stars were all out. Behind us was the faintest possible streak of earliest dawn. The cannonade from the Danish bastion was terrific, the rattle of

the shells and their bursting incessant; and, as an accompaniment to the roaring music, the musketry fire swelled up in the air active and lively. Above the somewhat muffled grumbling of the common musket, we could easily discern the sharp ringing ping! ping! of the Prussian *zündnadelgewehr*. The air was all alive with flashes of fire, as I said, and the smoke lingered pale and ghastly over the vast landscape; the smoke in a thousand puffs from large and small fire-arms; the smoke also from a vast conflagration arising from the doomed houses of the unfortunate Dybböl village. It was a scene worth walking many hundred miles to see—a scene worth waiting for many a long, weary day. Above the noise of cannon and musket we could hear the hurrahs of the Prussians, and the counter cheers of the Danes.

It was past four before the trumpets sounded the alarm in Sönderborg. Orderlies had, however, been already galloping about in every direction, and by this time the whole of the little Danish army was in motion. Battalion followed battalion; cavalry pressed on infantry; battery pushed on after cavalry; the walk broke into a run; swiftly and eagerly the columns advanced, combining the utmost speed with the most admirable order. The sound of their heavy tramp on the hollow iron pontoons of the bridge was

like thunder. The ardour of these brave Danes shook my prudent resolution; I followed Captain Fallesen's battery, the 11th across the bridge, ascended the fort at the *tête de pont*, then followed the road up to the vicinity of the Dybböl Windmill. The whole movement of the army was managed with the most praiseworthy method and precision. The pioneers were at their places on the pontoons; the palisades were lined with riflemen; every soldier fell into line as if by instinct; the masses of infantry were deployed as they issued from the defile of the *tête de pont*, and formed in long, dense lines all along the crest of the hills. It was about five when I reached the Dybböl Windmill, and there was for about half-an-hour something like a lull in the musketry fire. The Prussians had evidently suffered a first repulse, and were preparing for a second onset. At half-past five the action brightened up again, and slackened once more towards seven o'clock.

Hearing heavy cannon shots on the side of the Vemmingbund, and hastening to my first point of observation on the Windmill Battery, beyond the Sönderborg Slot or Castle, I beheld one of the most glorious sights my eyes ever witnessed. The Rolf-Krake, the only Danish ironclad in these parts, had got up steam, and was advancing

into the Vemmingbund bay, to fire into the right flank of the Prussians. By walking along shore for about half-a-mile, from a projecting point somewhat beyond the Sönderborg Ladegaard, I could follow the movements of the gallant vessel, and see the heavy fire from the two 64-pounders arming each of her two turrets. The effect of her shells amongst the masses of Prussian infantry advancing to attack the Danish left was terrific, and there is no doubt but it came in at the most critical point, and determined the issue of the day. By the time I reached the spot, the Prussians had retired on this side, and the iron-clad, having achieved her mission, paddled slowly away to the place of her anchorage. She chose her line of retreat along the Broagerland shore, close under the long line of those formidable Prussian batteries, the fire of which has for the last two weeks been so incessantly dinned into our ears. Not one of the Prussian cannon allowed her to pass unchallenged. Their shells fell into the water, a few yards from her bow, from her stern, from her sides. They fell into the water by the score, all along her progress, scouring the water as they fell, and raising high spouts of white foam, not unlike the spurts issuing from the nostrils of a herd of dolphins or whales. I saw none of the shells strike the vessel, though I was told she did not altogether

run the gauntlet of all that long row of artillery with perfect impunity. She had chosen her path out of the bay with great judgment. Had she kept on the northern or Dybböl side, the enemy's fire would, though more distant, have been better aimed. But as she hugged the Broagerland side, almost grazing the very cliffs on which the batteries are erected, she offered no broad target to the hostile artillerymen. Most of the shots flew widely over her, and buried themselves, harmlessly enough, in the waves. There was a crowd of spectators on the shore on the Alsen side. We raised our caps, and cheered her with all the might of our lungs.

The fire on the hill had, in the meanwhile, become fainter; so faint, indeed, that for the second time I and other idle spectators deemed it safe to venture across the bridges. Across we went up to the windmill and bastion, till, standing on the breastwork at No. 6, we could see the fag end of the fight. It was past eight; the muskets had done the best of their work, and all we heard was the Danish cannon adding wings to the feet of the Prussian fugitives. A third German onset had been defeated. The Prussians kept up a sullen, random rifle fire for an hour or two more, then, having withdrawn all their troops, they

recommenced their furious cannonade from the Broagerland batteries at the various forts on the Dybböl line. One of their shells burst at a few yards from us just as we were leaving the bastion. I saw it come rattling and clattering in the air, right on our path, so straight upon us that one of my companions scampered madly away as if it had been in his power to outspeed it, and the other looked about for shelter where no shelter was. I stood still looking at the fiery monster, but whether owing to greater firmness of nerves or to the terror that had actually rooted me to the spot, I did not at the moment inquire. As other missiles of the same description followed in quick succession, we deemed it prudent to beat a retreat, and by falling back a few hundred paces, we were soon out of the formidable 'line of fire.'

Having thus given a plain and honest narrative of what I saw of to-day's action with my own eyes, I shall add such particulars as I was able to gather from the testimony of other persons.

I have mentioned, in some of my foregoing letters, a party of young Englishmen gathered at this place out of mere curiosity to see actual war, and have given my candid opinion of the rashness with which they have been all this time running

into unnecessary danger. I have not named them hitherto because their conduct appeared to me neither sane nor rational; but they turned out in this affair quite the heroes of the day, and, as I have their permission to give their names, I believe it a duty to award them such poor meed of praise as my pen can impart. One of them is the Hon. Auberon Herbert, brother of the Earl of Carnarvon; another is his travelling friend, Mr. E. W. Hall; a third, Captain Shelton Bond. The Danish soldiers have been for several days familiar with them; some oddity in their costume, and their imperfect knowledge of any available language, having made them rather conspicuous. Seeing them often in the thick of the enemy's fire, without any reason or object, these good Danes observed that 'the English often labour under fits of the spleen, and when so afflicted are rather glad than sorry of any opportunity to get knocked on the head, and rid of that and all other complaints.' This day, however, the language of men and officers towards these gentlemen was very different. It was cheering to the soldiers on so hot an occasion to see mere unarmed civilians sharing their dangers; and when, in the thick of the fire, Mr. Herbert stepped out of his shelter at No. 4, and rushed with the ambulance to rescue the wounded almost from the midst of the foe, their blood staining that very buff coat which had been

the subject of so many sneering comments, and won him the appellation of 'Der Lederne Mann,' the enthusiasm of the troops for the brave 'Engländer' knew no limits, endearing to their hearts the very name of the country from which these unlooked-for auxiliaries came. From these excellent eye-witnesses in the front, and from a variety of other sources, I learnt that the first attack of the Prussians was, as I had supposed, directed against No. 6, a bastion which they hoped to have silenced by their fire of the day before yesterday; that a contemporaneous onset had been made at a point between Nos. 8 and 9, whence the effort quickly extended to the whole line. They saw the Prussian columns forming in good order at the village of Dybböl, and coming on with brave spirit, till they were within reach of the Danish cannon, when they turned and actually ran: they saw the Danes, in their turn, gather in large masses between the bastions, and issue forth in pursuit of the fugitives. The fight was limited to a mere exchange of infantry fire, as the Prussians did not wait for a hand-to-hand encounter. Our friends have no great opinion of the accuracy of aim of the Danish infantry, and think that, in point of small weapons, they are easily overmatched by the German sharpshooters. On the other hand, the fire from the Danish cannon is said by them to be excellent. It is very

evident that this fire is more than the Prussians can well bear. The same phenomenon occurred which I mentioned in one of my letters as having been remarked on a former occasion: *i. e.* that the gentle and harsh means employed by the officers of that nation to induce their soldiers to face the cannon were equally unavailing. This morning hundreds of Danes assured me that they heard the enemy's officers cry '*Vorwärts! Vorwärts!*' and they also heard the dogged '*Nein! Nein!*' of the soldiers, who evidently thought they were the best judges of the amount of danger they should be called upon to incur, and of the nature of the obstacles they should be asked to overcome. 'Wherever a shell fell,' our friends aver, 'there the Prussian infantry was scattered like chaff before the wind.' Some of the picked regiments, however, showed a better countenance, and stood their ground more manfully.

On my way to the Dybböl Windmill both times I had to pass several carts conveying the Danish wounded. Some came on stretchers, borne on the shoulders of stout ambulance men. They were, for the most part bleeding at the head, having been struck behind the parapets of the bastions. Not a few were lifeless, and I saw a mangled mass of raw flesh and blood which, had I

not been told, I could hardly believe to have been a man. The Danes, however, have nerves not to be shaken by trifles. I have already said how I saw the carpenters making coffins for the dead near to the very spot where the soldiers cooked their dinner. They go, steady and unconcerned, to any work they have on hand, perfectly heedless of any ghastly object that may come before their eyes, proof against any omen or foreboding that might disturb any other people's equanimity, or spoil anybody else's digestion.

The Schleswig troops (10th Regiment) in the Danish service behaved with distinguished bravery. In a momentous juncture they asked that the post of honour should be confided to them, and nobly they redeemed the pledge they had spontaneously given of their fidelity.

The Prussians have asked for and obtained a two hours' armistice, to have leisure to attend to their dead and wounded.

Only four of the Danish regiments were engaged, the reserve remaining, *l'arme au bras*, in the second line. If we are to believe the Prussian prisoners, the enemy also advanced with only two regiments, or six battalions.

The Prussians will try to make out this affair to have been a mere reconnaissance. But such movements do not generally take place in the middle of the night. My own impression is that

they tried what surprise would do for them; being repulsed, they returned to the charge again and again, and only gave up the attempt when it was proved to be an utter failure.

The Danish killed are officially set down at 14. The number was probably understated, and many have risen to 24 or 34. Among the dead are three officers. The wounded are 110 to 120; among them six officers. The Prussian prisoners were 25; four officers among them—one captain and three lieutenants, the latter wounded. Five Prussians dead were also brought in. The Prussian captives evinced a great deal of unseemly mirth, and made fun of the disgrace and humiliation that have fallen upon them. They are mostly Posen Poles.

Mr. Herbert and his friend, Mr. Hall, left us this morning, March 30th, after a stay here of only nine days. The former gentleman, after being the actual nine days' wonder to the Danish army, has departed, the true hero of the hour. I walked and rode out with him yesterday for the best part of the morning and afternoon, and we scarcely passed a man or officer on foot, or on horseback, that did not greet him and hail him lustily as a comrade and a friend. Not a few broke from the ranks as they marched by us in

columns, and shook him by the hand, till they almost wrung the arm from his shoulder. I never saw such genuine enthusiasm among these stout-hearted, and, to all appearance, phlegmatic people. His constant presence in the trenches and at out-posts, has made Mr. Herbert familiar with the vast majority of the Danish soldiers; but even those who had no knowledge of him by eyesight have learnt to single him out at a first glance, from mere description. The authorities at head-quarters seem no less struck with the novelty and oddity of the 'generous whim' than the humble privates with whom the Hon. gentleman courted friendship and comradeship. They have charged Mr. Herbert with despatches for the War-office at Copenhagen, and we have little doubt here that General Gerlach, the Commander-in-Chief, has sent up the Englishman's name among the candidates for the decoration of the Dannebrog.

The popularity of one man, as I said, naturally extends not only to all who can claim acquaintance, but even all who have one country in com mon with him. We were seated last evening round our Steinwein bottles at the Reymuth Hôtel, when, towards nine, the band passed under our windows, followed by a crowd of soldiers and civilians, all on their way home for the night. Mr. Herbert looked out at the window, and was instantly recognized as the 'Volunteer ambulance

man.' A shout of joy burst from his comrades, who knew he would be off in the morning, and wished once more to bid him farewell. In half-a-minute we were all in the street, linked arm-in-arm with the soldiers—each of us with two soldiers—Mr. Herbert in front, close to the band, and so on we marched all the way to the Town Hall, the band striking up, 'Den Tappre Landsoldat,' and other martial strains, and we keeping time, joining in the chorus, conspicuous actors in a scene of 'ovation and fraternization,' such as only the vicissitudes of warlike times can give rife to, or indeed make excuse for.

The admiration of these Danes for the English volunteer is, to say the least, reciprocated by this latter. Mr. Herbert himself, as well as his friend, Mr. Hall, and Captain Bond, all three of whom stood behind the foremost breastwork, were very eloquent about the calm and firm attitude assumed by these undemonstrative Northerners as they took their places on the trenches, lining them but thinly and feebly with their inadequate numbers, and bearing in their countenance the consciousness that the work of at least three men devolved upon each of them, and the determination to do that work, or give up their life in their endeavour to do it. The Prussians who attacked

the Dybböl line were, we are assured, no more than 6,000, and so far they did not greatly overmatch their opponents; but behind those six battalions 20,000 were drawn up; and had the vanguard found anywhere a vulnerable point in the Danish armour, the main array would have come up with such a powerful onset as the scanty Danish lines could hardly hope to resist; yet, calm and composed, did the Danes stand their ground. They could see the enemies' columns forming in great masses in the dim distance. Yet they gave their fire with cool indifference, and when their turn came to draw up in columns, and to sally forth as skirmishers, they left their flimsy shelter and marched out in the grey morning light, never asking if two or ten to one were the odds they were about to encounter. Yet the majority of these Danes seem to all the English gentlemen who see them, as they do to me, rather mere militiamen than real soldiers. They have hardly any military step, mien, or bearing; they are scarcely half-drilled, have but little skill in the use of their rifles, know not much about general or even partial evolutions; they are raw and uncouth, heavy and clumsy; but the stuff they are made of is the very best upon earth; and it is most admirably calculated for defensive work, for the task of patience and stern resolution which is imposed upon them.

Should the present war ever come to an end, and should these regions ever be allowed to breathe from the fearful storms that ravage them, perhaps the interest awakened throughout Europe about them, will bring hither those shoals of idle wanderers who explore the most untried or forgotten corners of the globe in quest of a sensation. Those who might thus be tempted to come and see the 'theatre of war,' will find here what nature intended to be the most blessed abode of peace. The handbooks a traveller supplies himself with on a projected tour in Denmark, do not even mention such spots as the Isle of Alsen, or its Sound, or Fredericia and the entrance to the Little Belt. Yet the country has peculiar beauties and charms of its own, and during the summer months it would be well worth not only a passing visit, but a prolonged residence. Indeed, I am not sure any part of the Continent, or even the most favoured rural districts in England, can combine such a variety of pleasing homely scenery, such a general aspect of ease and plenty, such a perfect haven of security and contentment.

We have now got beyond the equinox, and the sun begins to woo these Northern lands with greater assiduity than he bestows on the lower latitudes, with which possession makes him familiar, and which he rather snubs as a husband

than courts as a lover. The days are lengthening out, advancing towards that period of the year when the evening and the morning make but one cycle of daylight. What a morning it was yesterday! What a loveliness of heaven and earth! I walked along shore from Sönderborg to Hörup Hav, and saw before me the Dybböl Heights, topped with their far-famed windmill, the fair bay of the Vemmingbund, the woody coast of the Broager Peninsula, and farther on, the moat of the Flensburg Fiord, the broad opening of the Gelting Bucht, and the low shore of the Schleswig mainland, far away to the narrow inlet of the Schlei. There was a stillness in the air, a brightness and purity in the sky, a calmness over all that broad extent of water, which would have soothed the nerves of a lion in his first fit of fever. The blue transparency of the unrippled sea, the purpled tints of the distant woods, the silver hem of the fleecy clouds, seemed to belong to happier Southern climates; but for the comparative tameness of the scenery, and the absence of rocky peaks or bluff headlands, I might have fancied myself amid the shores of the Mediterranean, coasting the Straits of Bonifacio, or threading the channel of Piombino.

Opposite, at a little more than one English

mile's distance the white sandy cliffs of the Broagerland glance in the sun, and lining all those cliffs by scores are the Prussian 24-pounders, at whose mercy lie Sönderborg and its Ladegaard, and the whole shore till very nearly the mouth of Hörup Hav. Very keen eyes can easily descry the mouths of those formidable engines, and the artillerymen lazily lounging about them. Behind the breastwork of the Castle or Windmill Battery on this side a Danish officer stands, tablet in hand, taking down every shot and shell hurled against the devoted Bastions 2 and 6, on the Dybböl line. For a long spell in the night, and since the breaking of morning, those batteries have been at rest, as if humanized by the unspeakable repose of all created things. But presently the ominous puff of smoke arises from the embrasure. You count sixteen seconds, and the deep booming report awakens all the echoes of the abrupt Vemmingbund shore; yet a few more seconds, and another muffled report tells of the bursting shell, of the scattered dust of the earthworks; possibly, of a crushed Dane, too unwary to be on the look-out for the death messenger, or two slow in seeking the shelter under which his comrades are crouching.

Such is the morning sport of the Prussians. Such, with little or no variety, are the manœuvres

for the best part of the day. The real harm done is but trifling—the noise either supremely beautiful or hideously appalling, according to the peculiar constitution and fancy of him who hears it.

On my left, as I proceed on my path, still within easy reach of the Prussian 24-pounders, agriculture plies her industry with the happiest disregard of danger. Farmer Petersen, the father of twelve daughters, mentioned in a former letter, drives his team afield with perfect trust, though he is aware that the thatched roof of the Ladegaard is by no means bomb proof, and that a single stray shot can at any moment set his straw lofts in a blaze. The twelve damsels and the remaining female portion of the household have quitted the premises; but the head of the family abides, and the work of the farm goes on, notwithstanding the encumbrance of men and officers, troopers and chargers, cannon and ammunition waggons, encumbering, trampling, upsetting everything. The farm lands must be tilled, though the farmyard is a camp; the corn must grow and ripen, though it may be a matter of doubt whether Danish or German scythes are to reap it, whether native or foreign bakers will turn its fruit into the staff of life.

In the afternoon we went out, about the island, a large party riding or driving. We went by

the Ladegaard to the Southwood (Sönderkov), and across that and the Lambjerg Wood, we came to Hörup; we then struck across country to Tandslet, and by Miang to Augustenborg, and home by Ulkeböl. No one can imagine how strongly the country wins upon us, as by degrees it thaws and softens, exhibiting its first shades of early green. Augustenborg struck us, to-day especially, as a most lovely spot. The white castle rises just on the margin of its smooth *Nov*, or inlet, not unlike a swan just emerging from the waters and nestling in the bosom of the dense groves that line the whole length of the bank on the north side. That castle constitutes an object of great attraction, whether you approach it from the south and east, from Hörup or Tandslet, or whether you come up to it from the west, leaving the white-washed pile of Ulkeböl Church towering up in the midst of its old beech-trees behind you. The castle is rather disappointing on a close inspection. Its design is too plain and mean, even for the charitable purpose to which it is now destined. It was turned into a military hospital in 1848, when the then Duke of Augustenborg quitted his lordly residence, to join the so-called patriot ranks in Schleswig, the Government deeming it right that the rebel's property should contribute, as far as possible, towards healing the wounds his ambition

had inflicted. At the close of that war the castle was left desolate, only to become again useful at the outbreak of the present hostilities. The Dukes of Augustenborg have for many years kept up a kind of courtly estate in this their native abode. Besides the main Slot or Palace, they had built in the wood, near at hand, a snug pavilion, bearing to the Slot the same proportions as the Trianon does to the Château at Versailles; and all round the avenues are several houses of no mean pretensions, the lodgings of Hot-Marshals, Kammerherren, and other persons, the small flock making up the suite and retinue of a Lilliput "Residenz." There are still in the town some of the shopkeepers and minor traders who regret the happy times in which here was the capital of a vast domain, and long for the return of their liege lords. The late Duke, however, left no very favourable remembrances in the heart of his peasantry, who describe him as a harsh and grinding landlord. Not a little of the goods and chattels of the castle seem to have been sold off at the time of the confiscation; as nothing is more common than to see, even amongst the small farmers in the island, who are all extremely ambitious of showing their apartments, choke full of furniture, old cabinets, armchairs, panels, and other articles of house gear, altogether out of character with the humble tene-

ments they are made to decorate, and which would win a connoisseur's heart, were they exhibited at a London curiosity shop. There are wood carvings in some of the ponderous oak chests that must date from the sixteenth century, and are executed in the correct taste peculiar to that age. Some of the finest mosaic tables are also to be seen scattered about at some of the parsons' houses, all equally waifs out of the great wreck of the Augustenborg Slot.

The Isle of Als, as a last refuge of feudalism, is still extraordinarily rich in forests—mostly beech: the oak is only to be met here and there, but never otherwise than in its most luxuriant, spreading beauty. One magnificent tree of that species rises before the Overförsterbolig, or head forester's house, at Sönderskov, beyond the Ladegaard. It bears the name of 'King's Oak,' and is said to have been planted by Christian II. of Denmark, who was for eighteen years a captive in Sönderborg Castle. That tree can certainly bear comparison with some of the best specimens at Windsor or Hampton.

April 1st.—We have have had a restless night. The Prussians have been digging and erecting parallels very dangerously close to the Dybböl bastions; and the Danes, aware of their intentions, opened fire upon them soon after midnight, and are at it even now. Should the Prussians

carry their purpose into effect, and fire at the bastions from their new batteries in front, their projectiles could hardly fail to reach the town, and our position would become untenable. The very head-qrarters would have to be removed to Ulkeböl or Augustenborg.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF SÖNDERBORG.

The Fire at Dybböl. — Shelling the Town. — Havoc in Sönderborg. — Personal Narrative. — Sönderborg after Bombardment. — The People's Exodus. — The Ruined Houses. — The Scattered Inhabitants. — New Calamities.

April 2–5.

THIS, April 2nd, is the first day in which we have seen such serious work as may betoken the beginning of the end. We are still all stunned with the din of real war, and it is not without great difficulty that I collect my thoughts and compose my mind so as to give a tolerably distinct and intelligible narrative of passing events.

I had set out for a pleasure ride on horseback with a friend a few minutes after three o'clock in the afternoon. The morning had been rainy; but a strong north-westerly wind had driven the clouds from the heavens, and the weather was sharply cold though bright. Our horses were not exactly frisky but fidgety, exhibiting that kind of perverse freakishness, which sometimes, with them, arises from a vague instinct of alarm. The usual slack and unmeaning cannonade had

gone on the whole morning; but we had learnt to despise it, and had not even turned out to inquire what its purpose or its results might be. The artillery, however, on Dybböl Hill soon quickened its fire to a pitch not only unprecedented during the previous phases of this war, but hardly to be matched by anything we had read or heard of in any war. The cannonade was appalling. It was the battle of the angels and demons as imagined by Milton. We flattered ourselves for a moment that all this brisk discharge proceeded from the Danish bastions. We knew that Prussian batteries had lately been descried on the summit of the Avnbjerg, on several points about Dybböl village, and on other positions along the line, and fancied that the Danes, bent on the destruction of the enemy's works, wished to show the sluggish Germans with what activity and to what purpose cannon should be handled. The noise became so awful, that after a short hour's ride, we hastened home, and leaving our horses, made our way on foot to the Windmill Battery by the south-eastern shore; then again shifted our place of observation, and went to the top of a hill, in the centre of the windmills which crown Sönderborg on the north, where an arbor in the corner of the garden commands the most extensive view of the Dybböl heights across the Sound. From the vantage ground we thus successively occupied, we had it

in our power to see the flash of every gun, and to follow the path of every shell. The Danes, it soon became apparent, had not taken the initiative in the action; it was the Prussians, who, after all that mere farce of a three weeks' cannonade, opened their fire with a will, and went to work as if they really meant mischief. Possibly, they had hitherto merely kept up their play at cannon-balls to give themselves time to complete their works in front of the Danish lines; possibly, also, their Government had, at last, given up all hopes or fears of a Conference, and had telegraphed to their commanders that the time for shilly-shallying was past, and that it behoved them to show that forbearance did not on their part arise from weakness. They had hitherto limited their activity to the throwing of a few hundred shells daily from their batteries at Broagerland. Once only they had tried the range of a few field-pieces from the top of Avnbjerg; but to-day they unmasked their batteries both from that summit and from Dybböl village, and their 24-pounders thundered all along the line from extreme left to extreme right. The fire was so well maintained that it was difficult for a spectator to follow the reports as they crowded upon one another, and often two or more at one time. Some of us counted as many as twenty-five shots in the minute, and an Englishman assured us that 2,500 shells had flown

through the air in the lapse of an hour. All this furious attack was mainly directed against the Dybböl bastions, where the Danes showed the best countenance, and for a long time gave the enemy as good as he sent. The batteries from Broagerland, however, besides aiding in the work immediately before them, found leisure to bestow some of their attention upon Sönderborg, and about 100 of their shells were aimed at the castle, at the *tête de pont*, and at as many of the lower buildings of the town as were more immediately within their reach. I have not, as yet, been able to ascertain what amount of damage all this shower of projectiles may have done to the Danish line. Some of the officers who have just returned from outposts assure those who are willing to believe them that the mischief is but trifling, and that the bastions are none the worse for the tremendous noise which has been for more than six hours incessantly kept up against them. The evidence of our own eyes, however, would rather induce us to make some abatement in these flattering assertions. The fire of the Prussians was returned by the Danes with less spirit as the day declined, and it is difficult to share the assurance entertained at head-quarters here, that the Prussians, after all the havoc of the day, will be as far from having it in their power to venture on an assault to-morrow as they were in their pre-

vious attempts of the 17th and 28th of last month. That none of the batteries on this side have been silenced, we have been able to ascertain. The drawbridge at No. 6 has been burnt. however, and at No. 10 a musketry fire has been heard, a circumstance which might induce a belief that the Prussians have shown themselves at an inconvenient promixity.

Whatever the material consequences of to-day's action may be to either of the belligerents, the mere distant sight of it was appalling to us neutrals. The stormy wind drove the smoke and the scent of gunpowder right against us, and there was no 'sulphurous canopy' to hide a single flash of a cannon from our view. The very farm-houses that were burning to the ground on many quarters of the landscape—a never-failing accessory to these scenes of destruction—glowed in the distance with hardly any perceptible flame or smoke, so utterly was every vapour swept from the ground by the too violent blast. As the sun set, and darkness settled on the face of the earth, the wooden barracks in the vicinity of the bastions also caught fire in four or five different places, and their glare gleamed dingy red, like the lava of a volcano, as if the embers smouldered and crackled, smothered by the overpowering force of the very element that generally feeds fire. A crowd of soldiers, mixed with a few of the towns-

people, had thronged around us as we stood on our hill-top, and dumb amazement, vague terror, and a sort of wild joy were depicted on every countenance. There was sublimity enough in the scene before us to strike a deep sensation into the commonest nature.

Within the town itself the excitement was more lively and active The whole population was taking to flight. Groups of women with infants at their breasts, old people holding the hands of children, well-dressed ladies, and decrepid invalids, were all rushing from their houses as they would have done in an earthquake, rushing from their doors and hurrying along the streets, regardless of the throng of tramping regiments, rolling artillery, ammunition waggons, cartloads of furniture, ambulance stretchers, and carriages conveying the wounded from the battle-field and the sick from the hospitals. It was a universal exodus. Not only every person able to move, but everything capable of being moved, was under way. No less than four shells had struck the old castle; one had fallen at head-quarters, another at the Holsteinisches Haus; several others had lighted upon this or that house; terror spread everywhere. Between ninety and a hundred had showered down before we reached our hotel after dusk. The officers of

the staff had removed to a house far up town, the quarters they had hitherto occupied being a heap of rubbish. Several of the citizens' dwellings, mean and flimsy structures, were mere wreck and ruin. Their roofs had been beaten in and crushed as if they had been made of paper. Only one of the houses close to the castle took fire, but the flames did not spread, and were soon got under, thanks, probably, to the active exertions of the fire brigade; owing also, perhaps, to the extraordinary strength of the wind, which beat down the conflagration of the barracks on Dybböl Hill, and actually blew out large fires as it would a candle. Two of the townspeople had been killed; a score, more or less, seriously hurt; officers' luggage and led saddle-horses were everywhere to be seen removing to a place of safety, under care of the soldiers. Two of the representatives of the French press, who had only yesterday made their appearance, declared that they had seen enough, and made at once for Hörup Hav, laden with their carpet-bags. English correspondents disdained to join in the undignified skedaddle. Several of us were lodged in some of the most exposed houses in the town; we went to our dwellings *en masse*, helped each other in packing and removing our luggage, and gathered together at the Hôtel Reymuth, an inn without innkeeper, in the forsaken and gutted rooms of which

we lighted fire and candles, and where I am now, at three o'clock after midnight, endeavouring to close this letter, in an abode of comparative security. It was a bright starlight evening as we first entered the town, but the weather immediately afterwards changed to a perfect deluge of rain, which has somewhat slackened without putting an end to the enemy's fire, and which may so drench the fields as to drive from his mind every thought of an attack in the morning. The order and calmness inseparable from all the movements of the Danish army, owing, perhaps, to the impassible and somewhat slow nature of the people, did not belie itself in this supreme juncture. About forty dead and wounded were brought in from the bastions. The ambulance men conveyed them, perhaps, in too great a hurry, and the hard work they had in removing the sick from the hospitals made them somewhat regardless of the sufferings of their charge. A poor soldier passed under our windows both whose legs had been shot away, and the anguish of his writhing stumps wrung from him heart-rending screams not to be forgotten by any one who heard them, an unusual occurrence among these enduring Northerners, who for the most part die without a groan. The men, drawn up in long array along the street through which the sad convoy of their disabled comrades passed, looked on with their

wonted silent composure, not without an emotion of pity on their countenance, but with the same earnest determination to go out and take their place, ready to share their fate, whenever duty may bid them. The Prussians may bury the Danes under a shower of balls and shells, but the intrepidity of these brave soldiers will, I am sure, continue true to itself to the last.

The cannonade never ceased during the night, and it broke out again in all its briskness since daylight, April 3rd. It is now seven o'clock A.M., and there is no sign of an attack on the part of the enemy. The thorough wet and gloomy weather may, in all probability, compel the Prussians to put it off.

The final day has come for poor Sönderborg, and I have been fairly routed out of it. I closed my last letter at about seven o'clock in the morning, and being anxious, according to my wont, to post it with my own hands, I sallied forth from the Hôtel Reymuth. To walk from this place to the lower town was an enterprise of no trifling danger. What is called the 'Royal,' or town, post-office had been struck with two shells, and was a mass of ruins. The *feld*, or

military post, was packing in breathless haste, with no great chance of avoiding the same fate. The furious cannonade of yesterday afternoon had wrought far greater mischief than we were aware of. I stated that the dead and wounded among the townspeople were last evening at nine o'clock about twenty-two. Their number before the night was over had risen to fifty-seven. Since daybreak the shower of shells had recommenced with the utmost violence, and the shells, which had hitherto spent their fury among the buildings of the lower town, now took a bolder flight above the whole extent of its habitation up to the height of the towering windmills. There was no safety in any part of Sönderborg. The head-quarters were packing hurriedly, and General Gerlach, with all his staff, was making ready for a flitting to Ulkeböl, where the hospitality of my good friend Parson Meyer awaited them. The terror and desolation of the town had reached its climax. A great many of last evening's fugitives, turning from imminent danger without a thought of the future, had only quitted their houses in the maritime quarters of the town to repair to the friendly dwellings of the people in the upper town. But the higher regions had become in the morning as unsafe as the rest, and the train of fugitives was swelling at every minute. Only one or two tenements were in

flames in the course of yesterday afternoon, and the gallant Copenhagen fire brigade had been able to stem the violence of the flames and prevent them spreading. This morning no less than twenty houses were burning, and as the wind freshened there was every prospect of a general conflagration. The number of the houses all but levelled with the ground began to be appalling. The Radhuus or Council House, the Holsteinisches Haus and the Alssund, two mean hostelries of the lower town, were mere wrecks. The Burgomaster and the head officer of the Board of Health had been driven from roofless dwellings. The apothecary's house, a large building where the head-quarters had been established, was clean gone, and the same fate had befallen the adjoining watchmaker's. As we heard the particulars of yesterday's havoc, the destruction of to-day gained ground upon us. The advance of the shells was overwhelming us like the progress of an irresistible tide. There was nothing left for the most obstinate to do but go, and the signal for my own departure was of course given by the removal of the head-quarters.

Sönderborg is gone or going, and it seems as if the Prussians had determined not to leave one

stone of it upon another. Yesterday's cannonade was mainly directed against the Dybböl bastions, and the shells that assailed the town from the batteries of Broagerland seemed to be fired almost incidentally, by way of wanton amusement, and were apparently intended rather to frighten than to do much real harm. But this morning the whole rage of the Prussian cannon spent itself on the devoted town. Disappointment at their ill-success in Söndeved seems to have made the assailants perfectly savage against the helpless capital of Alsen. Unable to show their bravery in a storming attack upon Danish bayonets, the Prussians did not shrink from the unprofitable sacrifice of an open town. The Danes are furious at what they call a 'dastardly outrage, a breach of all the laws of war, and a departure from all the principles of modern civilization. It was to retrieve their character as a fighting nation,' they say, 'that the Prussians, after being worsted in so many encounters, solicited the post of honour before Dybböl, and reared against that position such a force of artillery as ought to have blown it and its defenders to atoms. Yes! they were not content with achieving by a cannonade what they durst not effect by assault; but their very cannon are not pointed at the breasts of men standing up in their defence, but against a miserable crowd of

women and children, almost as much at a loss how to fly as they are unable to fight.'

I have been willing to make myself the interpreter of this universal outcry of the Danes, because, neutral as I endeavour to make myself on all their subjects of dispute, I really believe it would be difficult to find a good excuse for the behaviour of the Prussians in this bombardment of Sönderborg, even if they acted on the necessities sometimes imposed upon a weaker party by the natural laws of self-preservation, and even if the war were on their part a defensive, instead of an aggressive one. The General in command against Fredericia did not open the bombardment of the city without a timely intimation to its inhabitants, allowing them twenty-four hours to withdraw from its walls; yet Fredericia was a fortified place, and the people who remained in it might be thought to have cast their lot in with that of their garrison, while Sönderborg is hardly an integral part of the Dybböl line of bastions, all of which might be taken before any necessity arose to offer Sönderborg the alternative between surrender and destruction.

You must imagine the whole of the 4,000 inha-

bitants of Sönderborg, and the thousand of men and officers billeted upon them as its garrison, suddenly spread along every road and lane in the island, applying for quarters at every farmhouse, village, hamlet, and hut, already for the last nine weeks as full of military guests of every degree as houses, stables, barns, and straw-lofts can afford, and then consider what probabilities there may be of a stranger applying for lodgings with success from door to door, especially if this luckless stranger happen to have six other houseless fellows, who must needs be taken in with him or sleep with him in the open. All I can say, by way of illustrating the condition of this little island in the present strait is, that by a *ruse de guerre*, perfectly justifiable under the circumstances, I and each of my companions, with a view to insert the thin edge of the wedge, presented ourselves singly before as many of the masters of the little fishing-boats moored at the piers of Hörup Hav, and asked if they happened to have room *for one* in their narrow hold, and the answer was that they had all been bespoken, —some for two, some for three, families of Sönderborg citizens, and that they were not at liberty to dispose of one inch of ground either on deck or below.

Although it is my settled opinion that a Correspondent should be a thing and not a person, and should obtrude as little as possible upon the scenes he is describing, avoiding the fault of that notable egotist Dante, who saw nothing in limbo, purgatory, and the other regions except himself, his little 'rancours, his political crotchets, and theological quibbles—still, there may be occasions when the spectator's own adventures, and the shifts he has been put to, may help to lay before his readers those minor particulars of the situation which would otherwise hardly find place in a more dignified narrative. It is under the influence of these views that I shall now proceed to describe by what chances I came to make my way back to the ruins of what was Sönderborg.

After tramping about all day, and in vain applying for shelter from house to house, I succeeded at last, on Sunday evening, the memorable 'Low Sunday,' in getting my supper, a sofa, and a writing-table at Augustenborg. To find a couch, however, was easier than to be at rest upon it, for the good Samaritan who took us in was bent on extending to all comers the same hospitality he had shown us, and as he exacted from others the same scot he had demanded of us, *viz.* a circumstantial account of the 'horrors of the bombardment,'—the banging of doors, the stamping on floors, and the jabber of voices was too incessant for

eyes, no matter how heavy, to have a wink of sleep.

Towards eleven o'clock P.M., we issued forth to post our letters, and wishing to have a last glimpse of doomed Sönderborg, we trudged along in the dark, drenched and blinded by the rain, down to the causeway crossing the Augustenborg Fiord, and there, standing before that broad sheet of water, we could enjoy, at about four miles' distance as the crow flies, the sad but imposing sight of a vast conflagration. The air was so thick and the rain so heavy, that the flames strove in vain to light up the canopy of heaven, and all we could descry was a low red streak, with dark shadows flitting up and down on its glaring surface, like so many demons dancing and revelling in their darling element, stirring it and chafing it, as if fretting at its sluggishness, and rousing it to more ruthless mischief.

In the morning we were up early; soon after eight, we set out in quest of our wandering head-quarters. They had found no accommodation, we were told, in all the rooms of the spacious Ulkeböl Priests' court, and had moved farther west, to a neat farm rejoicing in the sweet name of Morgenstjern. The Feld-post and the Stadt-post, the telegraph-office, and all other institutions

with which we had more immediate concern had also gone all night a begging for some nook or corner where to lay their heads, and none of them had as yet been able to settle down anywhere. The rain had ceased for several hours, and the day was fine and calm. The whole of the little world of Alsen was out with us, and at every step we met friends and acquaintances congratulating each other, as half-drowned mariners after escape from shipwreck. The boom of the cannon reached us now and then, but the fire was slackening as we advanced, and it had ceased altogether when, at the Uölkebl turning, we came in sight of the windmills of Sönderborg. Ulkebol lies somewhat low and flat, at about one mile's distance from Sönderborg, and at the turning just before the church the road widens into a tolerably spacious avenue, going straight to its goal, and contrasting with all the other thoroughfares of the island, which are as narrow and winding as the heart of a most ardent lover of the picturesque might wish them. The Prussians, evidently, had gone to sleep on their work, and we determined to profit by that lull in the storm to go and see what was left of the little capital of Alsen, after nearly forty-eight hours' bombardment. The silence of the guns had deluded the fugitives into a notion that an armistice had been agreed upon, and the tide of people setting in

with us was as strong as that of the people who were still coming out against us. As many of the persons as were saved from the havoc of the eve, were anxious for the rescue of the things they had left behind, there were empty waggons going in for furniture, and there were laden waggons coming out with furniture. The whole road was alive and swarming like an ant-hill. The scene was gay in spite of the misery the poor people had left behind, or had before them, for the morning was fresh and the sun shone bright, and all that bustling, and jostling, and greeting was bracing and inspiriting; and the first sensation of all living beings on their escape from danger is one of relief which no prospect of future evil has power to subdue. Cartloads upon cartloads rolled slowly past us; cartloads of women and children, cartloads of chests, chairs, and tables, of beds and bedding especially, for home in this country seems more immediately than anywhere else identified with pillows and bolsters, and no matter under what roof, no matter even if in a ditch and under the vault of heaven, the good Alsener seems to think all is not lost so long as he can have his own smothering feather bags over and underneath him. Mere rubbish a good deal of that house-gear looked in the garish daylight, for which it was never intended; squalid and woe-begone were some of

the crouching figures, laden pell-mell in one heap with their chattels; but many, especially of the better sex, had not, even in those straits, been unmindful of their outward look; their hair was smooth, and their faces glowing and ruddy, their eyes smiled and sparkled, and brisk pleasantry elicited smart repartee. I saw a fair, bare-headed, long-ringleted young girl of eighteen seated by the side of the driver on the front seat of one of the best *chars-à-banc*. She had a large mirror on her lap, holding it before her at arm's length, like the Goddess of Truth; and to those into whose eyes the polished glass glanced back the sun's rays, and who told her 'she had better hold it the other way, and see her sweet face in it,' she answered with ready pertness that 'she had studied it long enough, and knew it all by heart.' The looking-glass was to the bright damsel the dearest of all her *lares et penates*; and, in like manner, every human being had in the hurry of that flight clutched at anything upon which his heart was set, and stuck to it in life as he would have clung in death. As we toiled our way towards town we could see the Sönderborg mills, all standing safe where we had left them, and across the Sound the Dybböl Mill was also tall and erect, all unhurt, in its place—that Dybböl Windmill, which the Danes have nicknamed '*le brave des braves*,' as no one in the army

is so constantly and so unflinchingly in the fire, no one seems more determined to hold his ground to the last. Twice in the last war was the gallant mill shot down and burnt, twice did it rise from its ashes. It is the palladium of Denmark and its army, and the Prussians have no great chance against the 10 bastions so long as the skill of their gunners is baffled by the doughty successor of those hundred-handed giants whose punch in the head was sufficient to level the Spanish knight-errant with the ground.

Well, we toiled our way into the town, we walked past the mills and the barracks, and till we reached our dear old dirty quarters at the Reymuth Hôtel, we saw that, though shells had lighted here and there and everywhere, the mischief done was but trifling. A hole in the roof or a shattered window makes no great difference in the outward look or in the internal economy of a town; but as we neared the Stadt Hamburg our old Feld-post was sadly damaged; the Town-post was a heap of rubbish; so was the Poste aux Chevaux, nearly opposite—the red shield, with the Royal Arms, hanging on the door, was nearly all that still stood; so were the houses, each and all, right and left, throughout the centre of the town, down to the Radhuus or Council-

hall; the houses on the main street, the houses on the side streets branching up to the hill, or sloping down to the sea — they were all wrecks. Here a chimney-shaft alone was standing, there a front wall, there part of the roof still hung, shattered and tattered on the main beam. Daylight had been struck through the narrow thoroughfares of Sönderborg. The burgomaster and the military engineers had been for weeks busy opening a wide cross-street from the Town Hall to the sea; but the Prussians had expedited ten times as much work in hardly as many hours. There was something almost exhilarating in that broad open space; people rambled about in the ruins, wondering with grim delight how the neighbouring Ucalegon had fared. There is always some secret savage pleasure in the contemplation of devastation on a large scale. As for myself, after two nights' unrest, I felt my head in a glow, and my fancy wandered freely, conjuring up old recollections of battered Gaëta, and jumbling up those blackened shafts and crumbling gables with the stripped columns and riven arches of the Roman forum. No less than 90 or 100 dwellings in one cluster were made utterly uninhabitable; about a score were burnt to the ground, some of them were still crackling and reeking; the furniture of many of them, rescued from the ruins, was piled up, in a miser-

able heap, in the middle of the street. People moved about, gazing their full, forgetting their own errands in speechless contemplation of other people's troubles. Business did not seem to have ceased in the town; life was not, to all appearance, extinct. Most shops were open, never having been closed; owners laid no claims to their property; nor did anybody covet what seemed to belong to nobody. The two streets sloping down on either side of the Town Hall were comparatively uninjured; but they were the dullest and most deserted of the town districts. All interest centred on those poor fragments in the centre. At that window used to sit, and sat till last evening, a pretty blue-eyed girl, the most arrant flirt of the town. There, past that gateway, that good old Doctor Physicus stopped you, on hospitable thoughts intent, and offered you a bed, screened, as he fancied, by the position of his house from the enemy's fire. Where are the bed and the house now? What has become of the doctor? What of the blue-eyed flirt? Safe, somewhere or other, very likely; but their homes are no more. In that house General Gerlach dined only yesterday; further, the officers of the Staff welcomed you with a friendly smile not twenty-four hours since. This was the town post-office; that the army post-office; yonder lies the Holsteinische

Haus, long wonted to refresh us with its rancid *smörbrod* and bitter thin beer. Why, our familiar haunts of the last two months are all blotted out at one swoop; our dearest associations with beleagured Sönderborg have vanished like a dream. And these poor inhabitants? Why, to them the haunts of youth and age, the associations of a life time, are gone for ever. The Prussians made their home a target for their untried artillery, and the substance of their life recollections was blown down to a mere blank.

Twenty-two dead and wounded were picked out of the ruins on Saturday evening, and fifty-seven more were, as we are informed, added to the list of casualties in the night and on Sunday morning. Women and children were among the dead. A young shopkeeper and his pretty wife had closed their premises, and were standing at their door ready to leave, when a shell burst almost at their feet, and their bodies were so shattered that the limbs of the one could not be told from those of the other. Terrible implements are these shells, and it behoves those who handle them to consider well whither they are hurling them. No intimation of the intended bombardment had been given; the Prussians allowed not one minute for the removal of non-

combatants. The complete razing of Sönderborg, as they must be aware, would not dismount one single cannon on the Dybböl bastions, and all the havoc of the last two days did not weaken the Danish position by a tittle. Anything more wanton, more objectless, or void of all result than all this noisy cannonade the annals of war have not on record. The stillness, of which we took advantage to visit the smoking ruins, was not, as we all believed, the effect of an armistice. No suspension of hostilities was solicited by the Danes; no exchange of *parlementaires* took place. The Prussians open fire when they list; they leave off when it seems good to them. Yesterday (Monday 4th), there was complete silence till half-past one or two, then the fire blazed away until evening. To-day their batteries have been again perfectly idle till this moment (half-past one P.M.), when the thunder is heard again, rumbling loudly above the roar of the stormy wind. Truly, the art of war is very difficult to compass, or the Germans of our time are the merest bunglers at it. Here they have been for two months hammering away at Dybböl, and the result is the profitless destruction of one-third of innocent Sönderborg.

It is hard to imagine what fuss and what

turmoil can be occasioned by the simple unhousing of 4,000 inhabitants. As I walked past so many helpless groups, as I passed so many doors gently but inexorably, because unavoidably, closed against so many poor applicants for admission, as I saw so many well-dressed women, so many tender children standing in the road beside their loaded waggons, uncertain where to go, at a loss where to lay their heads, with every prospect of a cold, wet, unsheltered night, I wondered how so great a calamity could have condensed itself on so small a spot of the globe. Why, the firing and evacuation of Sönderborg are a mere storm in a teapot in comparison with the burning and emptying of Moscow; yet hundreds of harmless and helpless beings must even here go through a vast deal of immediate suffering. To hundreds of unoffending families this mere sport of the Prussians will work lasting ruin. The stock of the petty merchant, the employment of the humble mechanic, are gone. The charity of the country people will not, so far as it lies in their power, allow their wandering townsfolk to perish; but military occupation leaves but little house-room in the largest farms. The Danish army had rather quadrupled than doubled the original population of Alsen. The 4,000 wanderers must emigrate to Fünen, to Zealand.

36267

Heaven grant that the farther they are compelled to go the better they may fare!

There was some expectation of an attack on the part of the Prussians last evening, but the night has gone off in perfect peace. Even the firing that began an hour ago has died off altogether. It is true that the war of the element is, and has been all day, at its highest. It was frosty last night; there has been a cruel wind, with snowstorms, the best part of the morning. This may possibly account for the enemy's inactivity.

After an interval of more than twenty-four hours the barbarous bombardment of Sönderborg recommences. Many of the inhabitants, reassured by the long silence, and uncertain as to the Prussians' intentions, thinking that they had repented of their useless cruelty, have either been lingering on the spot or going back to it to look after such of their homes as are still standing, and their poor contents. They are thus caught in a trap, and we shall have many more casualties to deplore.

CHAPTER IV.

ANXIOUS DAYS.

Progress of the Siege.—The Havoc at Sönderborg.—The Farm-yard at the Ladegaard.—A 'rare' Danish Gentleman.—The Danish Army.—Political Prospects.—The Position of Dybböl.—Its Approaching Downfall.—Losses and Sufferings of the Danes.—Affair of the 15th.—Loss of the Rifle-pits.—Fall of Dybböl Windmill.—Destruction in the Sound.—Fall of Rönhave.—Incidents of the War.—Extremities of the Danish Army.—Projected Retreat.—The Coming End.

April 6-17.

I HAVE not written this morning, April 6th, nor is there any great reason why I should take up my pen this afternoon. There is no progress to be reported in the war in Denmark. The distance between the Prussians at Dybböl village and the Danes on the Dybböl bastions is one-third of a mile at the utmost, but it may take weeks before either party gets over that narrow but well-contested strip of ground. What sheer strength may not accomplish the Prussians seem inclined to achieve by surprise. The nights are rather dark, and the line of the Dybböl bastions is long; and the soldier who has not pluck

enough to run in at a dash may be induced to creep in by stealth. Some such attempt was made last night. At about eleven o'clock, a small detachment of Germans, two companies, the Danes think, made their appearance between Bastions 4 and 5, and driving in the Danish pickets, established themselves in the rifle-pits of these latter. There they lay still for the whole night, for the Danes, who have been for a long time in constant expectation of a night attack, did not deem it prudent to issue forth in the dark, and give battle to those few skirmishers, but preferred to give time to the main body of the enemy to come up within range of their cannon if they were so inclined. In the meanwhile, however, the alarm was sounded in the Danish camp and the whole army throughout Söndeved and Alsen was under arms. When morning dawned, however, those two small bands of intruders were seen all alone crouching in the Danish trenches, and upon a first show, on the part of the Danes, to send forth skirmishers to dislodge them, they went 'back again,' suffering the Danish outposts to re-occupy their position of the evening.

Yesterday, as the day before, nearly at the same hour, between two and three, the Germans broke

the silence of the night and morning, and there was a rather lively cannonade at the Dybböl bastions, with a continuation of the bombardment of miserable Sönderborg. To-day the entertainment is still the same, though it has been kept up for a few hours longer. The noise began between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning, and appears to be gradually dying off just as I am writing (half-past five). The fire against the Dybböl bastions (why need I repeat it?) is mere waste of powder and shot, although the cannon that batters those trenches is no longer at a mile-and-a-half distance, but scarcely, as I said, one-third, or at the utmost one half-mile. Vast as the array of the Prussian cannon may be from the Avnbjerg, Dybböl churchyard, Rageböl, and other spots along the line, their cannonade is not sufficiently well-maintained to work any lasting mischief. Whether it arises from want of a well-settled resolution, or from scarcity of ammunition at hand, or from lack of energy and endurance, or from the liability of their new-fangled cannon to get out of order upon constant use, the fact is that at no time has the shower of projectiles been so thick and so constant as to take away the breath of the defenders, to bewilder their minds, and so harass and belabour them as to prevent their standing to their guns and repairing such damage as their bastions may suffer.

After nearly four weeks' cannonade, the Prussian progress may be reported in those few oft-repeated words—'the Dybböl position is uninjured.'

The same cannot be said of Sönderborg. At the time I posted my last letter, about one-third of the town was either burnt or totally destroyed. Since that time, twice more have the heavy guns of the Broagerland batteries been roaring against the quarters still standing, adding ruin to ruin. I have just been out to-day to see the usual spectacle, and took my standing on the south-eastern shore, whence I could command a view of the whole line of fire. About one shell every two or three minutes was falling upon the town, and twice as fast was the cannonade exchanged simultaneously between the Prussians and Danish batteries on Dybböl Hill. The sharp-ringing bang of the latter strangely contrasted with the long and solemn boom of the former. The Broagerland batteries fired against the wind, and their shell was heard struggling through the air, and rattling like a thunder-clap for fully twenty seconds before it reached its goal. The efforts of these batteries were to-day especially directed against the houses lying on the slope of the hill, between the Town-Hall and the Castle. Some of

the buildings immediately behind the Town Hall were on fire, and their smoke was carried by the wind right across the Vemmingbund Bay up to the very muzzle of the very cannon from which the incendiary shell had taken its start. Masses of smoke rose also from more than one point behind the crest of Dybböl Hill, where some of the houses in Dybböl village had no doubt fallen victims to the raking cannonade of the Danish bastions. The smoke played a brilliant part in to-day's action, and the effect of its various hues, if transferred to canvas, would have made the glory of a first-rate landscape painter. The sky was swept clear of clouds by the keen north-east winds, but a rather heavy haze lingered on the western horizon, and formed a background for the phantasmagoria of the smoke playing before it, puffs of gunpowder smoke flitting here and there along the hill-crest, columns of incendiary smoke slowly rolling heavenwards, ashy-pale at the summit, where they vanished in heaven's blue, dark and red at the base, where the vapour blended with the fiery tongues darting through it. The damage to the town seems no very serious matter when seen from the outside. Most of the roofs visible from where I stood are still untouched, and the Town Hall is almost the only building through the crumbled walls of which daylight shines. The real injury in the

interior is, however, terrific, as I was able to ascertain by personal observation these last few days. The burgomaster's house, that of Dr. Mathison, with many others in the lower town, nearly at the water's edge, which had escaped the fury of the first day's bombardment, have been cruelly shattered since then. The Slot, or Castle, the foremost object on the shore, lying precisely where the Alssund widens into open sea between the Vemmingbund and Hörup Hav, has been repeatedly hit, but stands yet almost wholly unscathed. It would be no very material loss if it were levelled with the ground, for the barracks and sick wards established in its empty and dilapidated apartments are now untenanted, and its downfall would be unattended with loss of life. As to the edifice itself, it possesses no other beauty than that of bulk; it is a plain, square, yellow brick structure, with round, low, flat-roofed turrets at the four angles—a mere unsightly cumbrance of a large plot of ground which could be much better dedicated to the shipping interest, and converted into docks and marine stores. It possesses, however, some historical interest, as the spot where Christian II. of Denmark, an able monarch but a ruthless tyrant, was kept prisoner for eighteen years by his rebellious subjects previous to his removal to still stricter confinement at Kallundborg in Zealand,

where he expiated by long sufferings, and in the exercise of pious asceticism, the deeds of cruelty with which the early years of his reign were stained. The dungeon in which the wretched monarch was immured here is still shown for money by the town policeman. Were even the Prussian shells to strike daylight into the darkness of that prison-house, it is not likely that the memorials connected with it would perish, or that such a lesson as Christian's fate may convey to despots would be lost.

The townspeople of Sönderborg seem determined to risk a thousand lives rather than leave their furniture a prey to the flames which are rapidly consuming their shattered dwellings. The procession of cartloads of their trumpery household goods still drags along all the roads throughout the island. The steamers at Hörup Hav, and most of its smaller craft, have left their moorings. A great part of the wandering population of the bombarded place have embarked, and sought a refuge in the neighbouring island of Fünen.

The strong attachment of these poor people to their homes easily transcends into heroism, and is especially discernible amongst the women, whom it seems so difficult to wean from the

fond notion that the greatest security for them lies within the sanctuary of their domestic walls, crumbling though they be. The mere din of the shells, one would think, ought to be sufficient to shake and shatter their delicate nerves. Yet the *sage femme*, my landlady, when urged by me to quit on the first night of the bombardment, pointed to her trumpery looking-glasses, prints, and other ornaments on the walls, with a shake of her flat head, plainly intimating her inability to survive the downfall of her household gods; I have since seen her rambling about the country, afraid to venture into the town, yet stopping as many as came out of it, inquiring how the house still fared, and the treasures in it. With a bravery that nothing can daunt, our dainty gipsy, Pauline, lingers alone in the Reymuth Hôtel, forsaken by her masters, stanch to the last in her watch over what is left of their scattered property. She is still ready with her can of beer—the only supply not yet exhausted, for the refreshment of any whom choice or duty still gathers on the spot. The poor girl is less tidy, and more haggard than ever. The havoc and sorrow around her have sobered her buoyant spirits; but of her own hardships and sufferings she takes no account.

The Danish head-quarters are at a little farm-house at Ulkeböl, and my letters bear the date of the spot from which they are written. I have chosen my residence, however, not at that village, but at the large farm which bears the name of Sönderborg Ladegaard. From the farm to the battered town round which so much European interest has lately been centred, the distance is only a short quarter of an English mile, the direct road striking across the fields straight to the sea-shore, and following it past the South Windmill Battery till it enters Sönderborg at the rear of the Castle. At the time when the bombardment of the town was at its hottest, this maritime way was not free from some stray shells flying over from the ruthless batteries of Broagerland. Luckily for us, however, there is another field-road, which goes somewhat round about across country, and which leads to the northern end of the town, by what the French would call *un chemin de circonvallation*. By this *détour* we are able to reach the Ulkeböl road with very little exposure to the enemy's fire—little exposure to such missiles as are not deliberately intended for us; for, as I before stated, it is always in the power of the Prussians not only to drive us from the Ladegaard, but even to annoy us in our flight from it, if they choose to avail themselves to its full extent of the formidable range of their guns.

A gallant dragoon, by name Koch, who has been placed at my disposal as an orderly, and does duty as my groom, appeared the other day at the door of the farmhouse with a bloody nose, and told us a shell had burst not far from the hoofs of the horses he was leading, throwing the earth in his face, and hitting its most prominent feature with no little detriment to its fair proportions.

The night has been quiet, as usual, if we take into no account the cannon-shots which the Prussians have been firing at regular intervals, like the clock striking the hours. The morning is perfectly still, and as I look out from the windows of the farmhouse where I am quartered, there is neither sight nor sound to remind me that I am within so short a distance from the theatre of actual war. This Ladegaard is but one hundred yards from the seashore, and lies in as close a proximity to the Broagerland batteries as the Sönderborg Slot itself. Only hitherto the Prussians have been too busy with the town to turn their attention to this mere rural suburb. The Ladegaard is a farming establishment on a gigantic scale. Its barn is a mass of buildings hardly less lofty than the Scala theatre, only not quite so solid nor so elegant. Its cow-house has room for 150 cattle, and the dwelling-house is, as I have

often said, in ordinary times, enlivened by the presence of a bevy of no less than twelve daughters. No less than two batteries, with all their men and officers, have been billeted on worthy Farmer Petersen, who has yet found means to accommodate a couple of houseless, wandering Correspondents. It is true, however, that most of the twelve damsels have been sent to safer quarters, and room is found in the casket empty of its precious jewels. For the rest, the scene about us is blissfully calm and peaceful. The artillerymen issue forth from the stables with their teams of horses which they go to water at the pond, hardly distinguishable in their weather-stained shell-jackets from the farm labourers who go out on the same errand. The cackling geese, disturbed by the tramping hoofs in the operation of their early toilet, gather on the margin of the pond, with their silly hissing noise, as if resenting the intrusion, but fall back before them, satisfied with that harmless protest. The Newfoundland dog chained in yon corner of the vast farmyard is rather whining than barking, not by any means angry at the presence of so many strangers, but very much grieved that no one should take notice of him. Here are bleating newly-ewed lambs, there cooing doves; farther newly-hatched chickens. Everything about us speaks of innocence, trust, and security; yet yon Broagerland

batteries have only to say the word, and all things that have life must try to save it by taking to flight, leaving the rest to share the fate of the demolished Sönderborg.

It is rare for a man to make new friends after the thirtieth or fortieth year of his age; but though I have long left those landmarks of my life's course behind me, that inestimable blessing has been actually bestowed upon me in my decline of life. It is not possible to find a more lovable human being in the flesh than the artillery captain, mention of whom has often occurred in the course of this correspondence, and who has been my almost indivisible companion since we first met at Schleswig on the evening of the affair at Missunde. There is something significant, I believe, in the odd definition given of the word 'gentleman,' as 'one who never treads on other people's corns.' To give no offence, either designedly or unwittingly, is certainly among the first requisites of a well-bred man. But courtesy, considerateness, and attention should be positive as well as negative, active as well as passive, and should still never be liable to the charge of obtrusiveness or officiousness. There is not one among the many strangers who have visited the Danish camp since the outbreak of the war—not one

whom my friend the artillery captain has not sought out and found the means of obliging in a thousand ways, *tout en ayant l'air* of placing himself under the greatest obligation to them. I have never mentioned his name, and shall resist to the last the temptation which now puts it at the end of my pen; but there is not one foreign correspondent or curious tourist who will not recognize the original from the sketch, however feeble, that I am endeavouring to give of him. I have heard a great deal of French politeness, of Italian courtesy, and I have seen a few choice specimens of the blandest and most accomplished 'gentlemen' in that country which flatters itself it monopolizes both the word and the thing; but I have never known so perfect a mirror of modern chivalry as I have found in the person of this rare Dane. A glance at him is sufficient to convince you that he is as brave as a lion, and he has shown a good countenance to the enemy's fire in several encounters, and especially at that little bit of hot work at Bustrup. He has a spare form, is of the middle height, slender and active, and looks his best on horseback. He has a thin, pale face, with highly *distingué* features, with cold grey eyes; one of those types of purest Northern blood which acts as the very leaven of this somewhat heavy and clumsy Germanized Danish race. His countenance and figure are not unlike those of the

King of Denmark, and the resemblance particularly struck me when I saw the Sovereign and the subject standing face to face in a conversation, in which the latter graced his station as fully as the former became his own. Though raised to no other rank than the command of a field-battery, my artillery captain is, perhaps, the best-known man in the whole army; the most valued friend of nearly all the officers, the most popular officer among the men. I was with him at the retreat, and his sharp ringing voice electrified the worn-out soldiers, and bore them up in their toilsome march as the shrill note of a clarion. I see him now, here at the farm, where his battery is quartered, and a smile from him, half a word spoken by him, is reward enough for his stout cannoniers, no matter what piece of hard work or of danger he may set upon them. His groom and his orderly, his coachman, and all other rough natures about him, seem to seek no other reward than the privilege of ministering to his wants. His fine bay mare, Metta, is more familiar with his voice, more attached to his person, than any home-bred Arab ever was to wandering Bedouin chief. The secret of all his treasure of love lies in the very expansive nature of the heart that is the magnet of it. He met us with a radiant face, two days after our expulsion from Sönderborg, imparting the glad tidings that 'a new colt was born to him.'

After an hour's quiet talk round our coffee-cups, he rose with a very earnest look, saying, 'Il faut aller et tâcher de gagner les affections du nouveau-né;" and truly he set to work with a will. He plied the little long-legged thing with milk, patted it, rubbed it under the chin, so long and so coaxingly, that when, on a glimpse of warm sun breaking out, he had the dam and foal taken out into the open, the silly young creature actually forsook its mother to toddle after its delighted master. Captain ——, my artillery captain, lives for everybody rather than himself. It would be little to the purpose to say that without him my task as a correspondent at the Danish head-quarters would have been very irksome and cheerless. From the moment I fell in with him he took charge of me. All was studied and contrived that could lighten my labours or minister to my comforts, and he seemed all the time to have no hand in it himself, but every man within reach was made subservient to my wants and interests through this invisible wire-puller, who bent high and low to his will, as if they had been his puppets. It is only the man's utter denial of self that has power to impose equal abnegation on the part of others. And all the time I found my way almost miraculously smoothed before me, all the time that I was cudgelling my brains to know to whom I was indebted for this or for that accommodation, the

unsuspected mover of all these springs seemed to court my company for his own sake, wormed himself into the secret of my petty troubles and discomforts, and made me almost fall in love with myself, out of mere delight at the regard he showed for me. As he bewitched me, so did he cast his spell upon all my colleagues, English or foreign, and upon all other strangers who consort with us. He seems never unmindful of any of his fellow-beings, never indifferent to their concerns. At the same time—and this is the most difficult part of the *rôle* of a gentleman—he never asks a question, never puts himself forward, never volunteers any service in mere words, or is lavish of his offers. He guesses at one glance whatever can give you pleasure; your wishes are gratified, and you are left to cast about for who it is to whom you are indebted for their gratification.

If his object in thus sowing kindness is to reap love and gratitude, most certainly the grain so liberally spread must now and then fall on good ground. For my own part, and that of my friends, the captain never goes out to outposts for his twenty-four hours' duty without leaving us grave and thoughtful, as if it were our own brother encountering mortal danger; and he never comes back, pale and jaded after his hard night on the field, without finding us all on the threshold of the house, as happy to see him back

alive and well as if our own life had been at stake. For the rest, the intellectual faculties of my artillery captain are fully on a par with the rare gifts of his character. Indeed, real active kindness is hardly ever to be found allied with dulness. He is a man of the pen as well as of the sword; has edited a journal, and sat in Parliament. He has travelled abroad, he reads and speaks English, is well conversant with the French language, in love with France and the French; he never goes out upon duty without a diamond edition of Béranger in his pocket. His tastes are nice, and rather fastidious, and he has an ermine-like distaste for coarse thought or loose conversation; rare in any man, let alone in a soldier. He is a *gentleman*, in short, a *chevalier*, a *galantuomo*; for every word may apply to him that is used in any language to designate a pattern of good breeding.

The cannonade was rather hot for the best part of the day yesterday in front of the bastions, but the town of Sönderborg enjoyed a comparative repose, and was only visited by an occasional shell from Broagerland. The fire of its ruined buildings smouldered still for a few hours in the morning, but went out before night.

Among the many good qualities I had reason

to admire in the Danish character, I must mention the total absence of conceit, and of all propensity to brag or bluster. They, I must say it in sober honour and truth, never disguised from themselves the terrible difficulties and dangers of their position; they never flattered themselves that they could offer a very long resistance against the terrible odds that two such colossal Powers as Prussia and Austria conspired to bring against them. They looked upon their isolated position, upon what they considered as 'the heartless desertion of all their natural allies, especially Sweden and England,' with silent but deep dismay. They were no less determined to stand their ground like men; they were sufficiently sure of themselves to know that the world would never reproach them with leaving anything undone that mere men could do. But they were also aware that their days were numbered, and that without some unforeseen providential interference, themselves, their brave army, their old Monarchy with the means and resources of a third-rate Power, and their cause—in their eyes the most righteous and holy — must succumb. Neither had they any overweening opinion of the famous positions which to some extent made up for their deficiency in mere numerical forces. They knew full well, before the outbreak of the war, that the Dannewerk was a fortress not to be

manned by anything less than thrice the troops they could muster; nor was the word 'impregnable' ever applied within my hearing either to the Dybböl bastions or to the ramparts of Fredericia. The Danes took their station behind these lines with full consciousness that they could and would do their utmost; but with perfect knowledge, likewise, that even the fall of these fortresses, one after another, was a mere question of time.

Neither do the Danes sin in under-estimating their enemies. As far as the Austrians are concerned, there never was a more universal topic of conversation in the Danish camp than the dash and spirit of the Imperial troops, the skill of their officers, the thorough temper and discipline of the men. From Bustrup to Oversö, and from Gudsö and Veile to the ramparts of Fredericia, the Danes not only acknowledged that they had worthy adversaries before them, but they extolled the brilliant qualities of Croats and Hungarians even to the disparagement of their own no less sturdy but somewhat heavier and clumsier troops. As to the Prussians, it is possible that they may be looked upon with greater rancour and antipathy; but you are aware that, in the encounter of the 17th ult., the Danes paid full meed of praise to the pluck with which the infantry of that nation came

to close quarters with the bayonet on the outskirts of the Dybböl village. That the raw recruits in the Prussian army wavered and hung back, both on the 22nd of February and on the 28th of March when their officers urged them to a rush upon the heavy cannon of the bastions on Dybböl Hill, is a fact which I have asserted on the most positive testimony of many Danish officers, men of honour, and gentlemen in whose truthfulness I have as full reliance as upon my own. On the first occasion, I repeat, Prussian officers were seen striking their recreant soldiers with the flat of their swords, and were heard upbraiding them with the exclamation, 'Verdammte hünde!' On the latter, the ringing word of command, 'Vorwärts, Vorwärts,' was answered with a sullen 'Nein, nein!' the soldiers striking the butt-end of their muskets on the ground, like men of whom impossibilities are expected, and who oppose the mere *vis inertiæ* to entreaty, threat, or remonstrance.

All this occurred then and there. I said it, and abide by it. The best proof of the extreme probability of the story, if not of its absolute veracity, lies in the very fact that the 'hünde' did not actually come on the 22nd, as they were desired, and that they could not be induced to obey the 'forward' order on the 28th. Had the officers only asked of them feasible things, and had the

men been sufficiently amenable to discipline, we should not now be discussing about the chances of the approaching fall of Dybböl, for its forts would already long since have shared the fate of those of the Dannewerk. That the men did not second their leaders as they should have done is also proved by the very great disproportion between the casualities among the soldiers and officers, as resulting from the Prussians' own official accounts, bearing witness to the extraordinary exertions demanded of the wearers of epaulettes to sustain the sinking courage of the men in the ranks. But while the Danes remarked and related all this, they neither evinced surprise nor showed any disposition to crow over this momentary vacillation of their enemy's spirit. They were fully aware that the great mass of the Prussian army consisted of very young recruits who had never seen fire, and they saw that a display of valour was exacted from them which could scarcely be exhibited by long-tried veterans. Small blame to the Prussian soldiers if they paused and wavered before the muzzles of those heavy Dybböl batteries. That their heart failed them at that first juncture is no security to the Danes that those same laggards may not become heroes, and may not come on with irresistible resolution on a second or third attempt.

Whatever prospects hard fate may have in store for them, however, the Danes can hardly bring themselves to believe that Dybböl may fall before the Conference opens, or even during the first and second week of its sittings. Their plenipotentiaries, they flatter themselves, will bring before the negotiators of the opposite party, and before the arbitrating powers of Europe, all the arguments which may be pleaded in behalf of a small and weak, but as yet neither broken nor seriously worsted Power. Denmark will still be able to speak out loftily and fearlessly, to hold her own, to appeal to the respect and admiration, not to the insulting pity, nor yet to the barren sympathy of sister nations.

Had the Conference time to meet and deliberate for five or six days before any untoward news reaches it as to serious Danish disasters at Dybböl, we must, indeed, for ever despair of diplomacy, if one of the first questions brought forward and satisfactorily solved is not that of a suspension of hostilities. The Germans have had full two months wherein to display all their overwhelming strength, and to strike a decisive blow if they thought a bad, or, at least, a doubtful cause could be hallowed by signal and final success. As they have taken matters so coolly and leisurely, when there was no diplomacy to tie down their hands, they ought to be less loth to

allow arms to rest now, and to afford leisure for peaceful negotiation to do away, if possible, with the necessity of further bloodshed. The Danes ought to be entitled to breathe. Be it remembered that they have been most reluctantly driven to this Conference; that they have throughout exhibited the most unqualified disgust at the bare mention of an armistice. They have been goaded to despair by the heartless desertion of Europe; they have been blinded with anger at the 'false promises and perfidious suggestions,' by which they were lulled into an improvident security, and induced to give up Rendsburg, Frederickstadt, and, perhaps, even the Dannewerk, under the influence of that specious declaration that if they listened to their friends' well-meaning advice, 'they should not be left alone in the struggle.' The evil that diplomacy did them diplomacy should endeavour to undo. Honourable conditions of peace may yet be wrenched from discordant and irresolute Germany; at all events, there is no reason why the roar of the cannon should not be silent in the field while the droning hum of diplomatic sages is heard in the Cabinet.

By writing this I am aware I give mortal offence to some of my dearest Danish friends, especially those belonging to the Dagblad and Eider-Dane school, who will hear nothing but of a glo-

rious downfall of Denmark, and of the burying of all her brave children under her ruins. But with all due deference to their authority, I must be allowed to express my opinion that the Conference and an armistice may still be the best means to befriend their country and lead to the ultimate triumph of whatever is just and holy in their cause.

The siege of Dybböl has become a very earnest game, and ought to be drawing to an end, whatever the issue may be. The cannonade for nearly the whole of yesterday and part of this morning, the 9th, can only be described by one word—it was 'terrific.' The shots and shells thrown by the Prussians averaged ten in the minute, and of these no less than 1,500 were aimed at Bastion No. 4. For their own part the Danes were by no means idle, and towards evening they had well-nigh exhausted their stores of ammunition. The Dybböl bastions are encompassed all round by a fiery line of no less than fourteen German batteries, and all of these were plied yesterday with untiring activity. The night passed off quietly, nevertheless; and this morning, after ten or eleven, the cannonade began to abate, and we have now perfect silence, a fact for which the darkness of the day may account; possibly, also, the lack of powder and shell in the Prussian

camp. It must never be forgotten that the Danish position is close and compact; fresh supplies are always at hand to replenish the empty magazines, and the open communication by sea secures both Alsen and Dybböl against any want. It may be that even the railway from Hamburg to Flensburg, and the road from the latter place to Nyböl and Broager, cannot display the same activity in behalf of the Germans. Possibly, also, the too frequent and rapid discharge of breech-loading cannon has a tendency to render the German artillerymen less chary of their ammunition; so that if their fire is lively, it is, at the same time, comparatively inefficient. This is the case also with their infantry, who, it is notorious, are not so particular in their aim as they would be were they armed with less handy and convenient weapons than their touch-and-go *zündnadelgewehr*. Experience would seem to establish that the soldier is apt to be too lavish of a shot that costs him but little trouble. The Tyrolese sharpshooter, in the late Italian wars, who had to toil for minutes with mallets and ramrod to load his piece, was aware that he had an enemy's life at the bottom of his barrel, and never gave fire till he felt sure that his game was as good as bagged.

Notwithstanding this kind of nervous and

spasmodic fidgetiness of the Prussian fire, it would be idle to assert that all this vast amount of gunpowder is burnt in vain, or that the mere noise has not a stunning and bewildering effect. Artillery officers who have been for the whole of one day and night in the Danish trenches come back to us in the morning pale as well as black in the face, jaded, done up. Their own strength and that of their men are tasked to the utmost, and the Danish army begins to suffer from over-exertion nearly as much as it did when it was deemed expedient to remove it from the Dannewerk. The weather, though milder, is hardly more favourable to their health, and since the bombardment of Sönderborg the exposure of some of their detachments to the inclemencies of the weather at night is attended with no cheering results. Fever has broken out with some virulence in the Augustenborg hospitals, and men are often sent there labouring under no other ailment than excessive fatigue. On the other hand, the losses of the Danes from the mere casualties of battle are by no means considerable. The Prussian shell is anything but murderous, and seems to spend its fury against mere trenches and breastworks. No less than four cannon were dismounted in one of the bastions yesterday, between sunrise and sunset, and the whole battery, breastwork, traverse, blockhouse, &c.,

presented a rather jammed and mashed appearance. The mischief is no sooner done than it is repaired, truly, but the energies of the men incessantly busy at that kind of Sisyphean work must be strained almost beyond endurance.

No man in the Danish camp can be induced to despond for all that. The dismantling of a part of a bastion does not, in their opinion, interfere with the free working of the other part; nor, were even a whole fort to be altogether blotted out of the row of ten, would the fire from the remaining nine be insufficient for the defence of the whole position; nay, were even three or four, or all and each, of the batteries to be silent, the natural advantages of the line would still offer a very strenuous resistance to the onset of the foe. Behind the heavy batteries of the bastions, the Danes have numerous field-pieces, and, besides these, they have a goodly lot of those *espingardes* which did such excellent work both here and at Fredericia in 1849.

So long as the war resolves itself into a mere play at cannon-balls, no doubt the Prussians have it all their own way, because they have a more numerous and more powerful artillery, and almost any amount of men to handle it. But when the cannon has done its utmost, when the

signal is given for an assault, the besiegers must come face to face with their foe; and then it must indeed go hard with the Danes if the smaller artillery of their second line is not more than a match for mere masses of unprotected infantry. There is an evil quarter of an hour for storming columns, in which hundreds of cannon in their rear can afford no support—in which the whole fire of the besieged is to be endured without the chance of returning a single shot. Desperate resolution, great rapidity of motion, and overwhelming numbers may overcome this and other obstacles when that meeting of Danes with Prussians takes place which is to be the real tug of war. In a close engagement with small arms and the bayonet, the Prussians have the benefit of the bigger battalions; but the Danish line is but one mile and a quarter long. The Danes are on their own ground, and they have bulk and weight and the instinct to mass together on their side. What the end of it all is to be, if war is suffered to proceed to the last extremities, time will show. The only thing that is quite sure is that the storming of Dybböl must needs cost a sea of blood, and that even the fall of Dybböl would not decide the fate of Alsen or bring about the close of the war. All this, however, supposes on the part of the Danes a power of endurance hardly to be expected of mere men. I mix

with the soldiers at every hour of the day and night, and can bear witness to their firm and patient bearing. I see no sign of discontent or discouragement. Out they march to outposts in the morning, back they come to night-quarters in the evening; they toil in the trenches, hammer at their barracks, shirk no duty, shrink from no danger. The mere march through ruined Sönderborg, the crossing of the bridges, the ascent to Dybböl Hill, the muster at the barracks—all they have to do must be done under the shower of the enemy's shell. The cross-fire from the fourteen batteries from Broagerland to Rageböl is so harassing that staff officers and orderlies alight from their horses and walk to avoid unnecessary exposure. Diogenes placed himself right before the target at which a clumsy archer aimed his arrows, that being the only spot where he ran no chance of being hit. In the same manner, the Danish soldier is hardly anywhere so safe as within the very forts at which the Prussians are so furiously blazing away all day long, not so much because the Prussian practice is bad as because everything in the fort is calculated to afford shelter to its defenders, while outside there is the danger of a projectile straying ever so little from its aim, or even of the fragments of one bursting ever so near its aim, and of the earth and stones and splinters flying

about in the air, whether the shot is a hit or a miss.

That the Danes have borne and will bear a great deal, those who have read my foregoing correspondence will readily believe; yet it is too often a mere feather's weight that breaks the camel's back, and the courage that cannot be daunted may in the long run be worn out. I see no symptoms of drooping spirits among the men, as I said, but some of the wisest as well as bravest officers look grave and evince some degree of uneasiness. As I know them to be the very men who will do their duty to the last, I have no hesitation in making myself the interpreter of their apprehensions, because I believe them to be grounded on a correct knowledge of the situation. The position of Dybböl, they always said, is strong, but by no means impregnable, and a fortress, the garrison of which has ceased to venture on a sortie, can, indeed, ward off its fate for a long time, but hardly avert it. I do not believe that by a candid statement of the difficulties with which the Danish army has to contend, I make myself guilty of indiscretion, or compromise the safety of my Danish friends. Were the worst to come to the worst, it will be well for the Danes that no false expectations should have been raised in Europe as to their absolute invincibility. Indeed, it may be just as well if public

opinion be prepared for all contingencies. Whatever may happen, the Danes will be found to have done all that duty required of them. No stroke of adversity can deprive them of the glory of a long and heroic defence. Whatever may be the result of the unequal struggle, the world will take the odds into account, and pay them a tribute of admiration merely for engaging in it; as it will always turn the very success of their enemies to gall and wormwood by merely throwing the taunt of 'four to one' into their teeth. Upon that understanding, that the Danes are but men, and can only achieve what lies within the limits of human power, let us wait and see what a very few weeks—perhaps only a few days—may bring.

The cannonade has been extremely loud this day, April 10th, from eleven o'clock in the morning till nightfall. The fire raged especially on the right, the side of Rageböl. Several shells fell on Sönderborg. The Dybböl Windmill (*le brave des braves*) had its sails and roof carried off by the enemy's fire. The discrowned stump is still standing. *Deus avertat omen!*

We have ceased to venture across the bridges.

There is not much to be dreaded from all that ceaseless shower of shells if you happen to be born under a particularly lucky star, for these blundering missiles are not aimed at your person with the fell intent and fiendish malice with which a rifle bullet singles you out among a thousand, if your uncommon height, or the epaulettes on your shoulders, or the star on your breast, attracts the marksman's attention. Still, one must be very sure that he is born to be hanged if he thinks himself safe from drowning in such deep waters. The ground between the bridges and the forts is literally all ploughed up by the ruthless iron hail. The soldiers pick up cartloads of fragments of shells, which they sell to the owner of a foundry in Sönderborg. One of our artillery captains, quartered here at the Ladegaard, went out on Sunday night with his field-battery complete; he came back *minus* two horses, one gun, and four men. He had hardly sat down to supper when his lieutenant stood before him with the intelligence that another gun was lost. Another captain who had gone out to relieve our friend was brought back severely wounded. He had been struck on his way to outposts. All these losses are promptly and cheerfully repaired; but there are limits to the resources of the Danish stores, and men are more difficult to replace than either horses or guns.

It is not too much to say that the losses of the army must be proportionate to the damage done to these batteries. These field-batteries, be it remembered, are scarcely placed in the front line; they are merely parcelled out all round at the various gaps between the bastions, and are intended to act as a reserve should the heavy artillery in position be silenced.

After achieving the destruction of half Sönderborg, and driving the inhabitants from the other half, those noisy batteries of Broagerland seem to have been ashamed of their work, and the fury of the bombardment of the town rapidly abated. A few shells are still showered on the staring ruins from time to time, nevertheless, but they add little or nothing to the desolation of the lower end of the town. The northern quarter is still unhurt, and not altogether forsaken. The gipsy waitress is still in charge of Reymuth's Hotel, and still hands foaming flagons of beer to the thirsty souls that frequent the smoky parlour. I visited the spot yesterday, and found no very perceptible change in the outward look of the town from what it was two days before. The place is certainly dead to all intents and purposes; but a few wanderers still linger about the ruins, and there is no doubt that Sönderborg, which

exists by right of its excellent position at the narrowest part of the Alssund, will rise again from its ashes, phœnix-like, the moment the tide of war has swept past.

There was a long lull—longer than we have experienced for several weeks—in the Prussian cannonade all yesterday noon and evening and throughout the night. It was reasonably supposed that the Prussians, reckoning on the havoc they had made among the bastions of the Dybböl line, were busy at the construction of new batteries, and pushing forward their parallels. They recommenced their noise with redoubled vigour this morning, April 13th, at ten, but the fire has been languishing since—a proof that, however advanced, they do not consider themselves quite ready.

The Danish army reckons its dead and wounded on an average at 70 daily: It numbers its sick and wounded in the hospitals at the rate of 25 per 100, and in the event of some great action strewing the field with the dead and dying, it is feared that no accommodation will be found for the wounded, either in the hospitals of this island or even in those of Fünen and Zealand, or of Copenhagen itself, so crowded are already all charitable institutions of that nature.

The Prussians have profited by the lessons of experience, and understand now that the efficiency of their fire must depend on its extension all along the line, and no less on its continuance throughout the twenty-four hours. The Danes on the bastions are harassed to death, and those who are sent to replace them are hardly less worn out than their comrades. Two or three foggy days we have had in succession have enabled the besiegers to advance their parallels within a dangerous distance. The crack of the rifle begins to be heard occasionally among the incessant reports of the artillery. The hostile batteries are on certain points within reach of the fire of small arms, and a rush over 500 or 600 yards of dry ground can at any moment refer the contest to the arbitrament of the bayonet.

We thought that the moment for this supreme trial of strength had come this very morning, the 15th. We were awakened at five by the trumpets sounding the alarm, and by the tidings brought to our bedside by a friendly officer that the Rolf-Krake was leaving her anchorage. We were up in a minute, and rushed across the fields to the sea shore, where, sure enough, we saw the iron-clad in motion; but we had hardly turned our glasses in that quarter when the sound of rattling chains assured us that the steamer had cast anchor. The affair at Dybböl was already over, and the

co-operation of the sea forces with the land army was no longer required.

We walked to head-quarters at Ulkeböl, and soon learnt the particulars of the encounter. The Prussians flattered themselves that the bastions, especially Nos. 3 and 4, had been dismantled and their cannon silenced, and, massing a few large columns in front of those posts, sent forward their skirmishers with directions to possess themselves of the Danish rifle-pits. The Danes at outposts, however, stood their ground, and the batteries from the forts rang out in clear notes that there was life in the old Danish lion yet; whereupon the assailants came to a pause, and upon seeing the ironclad ready to come to the rescue—that ironclad which so powerfully contributed to their defeat on the 28th of last month—they fell 'back again.'

It was the feeblest possible attempt at an attack, and it must have given ample evidence to the Prussians that Dybböl is not to be taken by the cannon alone. 'Why, with the noise their guns have kept up for the last fortnight, it seems as if the very hill of that name, to say nothing of its bastions and of their defenders, ought by this time to have been swept away before them. But the position is not yet materially shaken, and the little army which has it in charge, however sorely worn out and af-

flicted, will not surrender an inch of ground undisputed.

Truly, the ordeal to which the Danish troops are exposed would overcome the most heroic endurance. All along their way from Sönderborg and its bridges, up the ascent of Dybböl Hill, and on the way to its forts, they are exposed to a raking fire. Not one of their tents or barracks, not one of the hollows in which they have their bivouacs, and where they cook and sleep, and live altogether for twenty-four hours at a time, is safe from the ubiquitous shells. I was to-day at Sönderborg, and saw several corpses brought in, and laid in the dead-house for interment. I saw a good number of wounded men borne along by the ambulance-men on stretchers, two of them hideously black in the face, begrimed with the powder of the shell that had burst between them as they lay on the ground in their sleep.

Under such circumstances, can Dybböl hold out much longer? Will the day come in which the defenders, shrinking from the horrible death that encompasses them on all sides, will refuse to go forth across the bridges, or will the commanding officers, anticipating such a mood among their troops, become aware of the unprofitableness of all that irreparable waste of life, and resolve upon the surrender, or simply the abandonment, of the position? That Dybböl may be given up

to the Prussians seems to me far more probable than that it may ever come into their hands either by main force of arms or by a *coup de main* and surprise.

On the evening before last, at eleven o'clock the Prussians made a sudden rush on the Danish rifle-pits, placed at about 1,200 feet from Bastion No. 2, on the left, and possessed themselves of them. A company of Danish infantry sallied forth immediately with a view to recover the lost pits; but they were barely 200 men. They soon found themselves enveloped by a large German force, and had to withdraw as they best could, leaving seventy-five of their number, between dead, wounded, and prisoners, besides the contested rifle-pits, in the enemy's hands. The casualties in the forts for the same day exceeded the average 100 dead and wounded.

We had on this side reckoned the Prussian shots in the days of the hottest cannonade at the rate of 6,000 to 7,000 daily. In the German papers the account is much more formidable. They have, they say, 18 field-batteries on the line, between ten companies of siege-artillery, at work. Their daily cannonade averages from 10,000 to

12,000 shots. All this has, of course, very serious consequences on so small an army as that of the Danes. The Forts No. 1 and 2 are terribly shaken, and Nos. 6 is not in a much more hopeful condition. Earthworks, cannon, blockhouse, and all give in—all but the undaunted spirit of the Danes. How it will all end it is too easy to foresee, but the tragedy is put off from day to day, and the Conference may, perhaps, be in time to save the bright honour of old Denmark. The 8th Regiment of infantry alone has lost no less than 11 officers. There is no doubt also but the Prussians evince great lack of decision and of settled plan in their operations. They opened their frightful cannonade—I say nothing of their mere bungling and fumbling work of the three previous weeks, but the real formidable cannonade against the Dybböl line—at the beginning of this month, and after the first heat they almost forgot the Dybböl bastions to turn all the violence of their wrath against the defenceless town of Sönderborg. They seemed partly to have repented this wanton piece of Vandalism, and again, for five or six days in succession, thundered away at the forts. The fire was at first almost entirely aimed at the left; it then suddenly concentrated all its energies on the right. They have been all this time merely feeling their way. Yesterday, again, and the day before, it seemed as

if the Prussians cared but little for either the town of Sönderborg or the bastions of Dybböl, and all their efforts have been turned to a work of destruction across the Sound. Several of the houses at Kjœr and Ulkeböl Westermark were burnt, and no better fate awaits such as are still standing. The great establishment at Rönhave has been deserted, and its 150 cows, driven from their stalls, are now wandering without shelter about the lanes of Ulkeböl. Poor Farmer Rosen! With a house lying on the Sound within reach of the Prussian rifles in their lurking-places on the opposite woods of Sandbjerg and Storeskov, he has hitherto had an anxious time of it. His young, pretty, and accomplished wife and infant children have long since been banished to a safer home. But Herr Rosen himself lingered on the spot, out of consideration to the Danish officers and soldiers quartered upon him, towards whom he fulfilled the duties of hospitality with a liberal hand. His semi-rustic establishment was on the gigantic scale common in these regions, and was conducted with an order and care which entitled it to the honours of a model farm. Many are the English officers and idle travellers whom, upon my introduction, he showed with a most justifiable pride all over his premises, and all of them agreed that neater buildings, a tidier yard, more wholesome cowhouses, a sweeter dairy, a greater amount

of rural wealth, thrift, and good management, were hardly to be found in the most favoured districts of agricultural England. So happy a home, such fertile lands, so charming a site, could not be resigned without a pang. Farmer Rosen tarried on the spot, welcomed his visitors, drew for them the cork of his oldest bottle of Rhein wine, laid before them his choicest box of Havannahs, never inconvenienced by a crowd in his parlour, never ruffled by the unavoidable exigencies of half-a-score of officers billeted on him, never greatly disquieted by the rifle bullets that rattled on his window panes from the opposite shore of the Alssund. His day came at last. The Prussians have reared their batteries on the edge of the Sandbjerg woods. They opened fire on Rönhave, as on any other point of their long line, not with any apparent object that one may see, but simply because they have guns and like the noise of them. Yet a day or two, and the minster-like barn, the 200-stall cowhouse, the stable with its 20 farm-horses, the hay-lofts, the granaries, all the pride and wealth of the gentleman-husbandman, will be a prey to the flames. Destruction has swept over the whole face of Dybböl and of the best part Söndeved. The turn must now come for the Isle of Alsen, and the tenements nearest the sea-side must bear the first brunt of the war. Rönhave has gone.

Our dear Sönderborg Ladegaard must soon follow. The flocks have been penned up in the woods; for the herds the foresters' huts will afford a refuge. The farm-horses and part of the stock may perhaps escape the impending wreck; and the family, in all probability, what still lingers behind of them, and their guests, military as well as civil, will take themselves off in time. Shells and fragments of shells have not failed to give them timely warning for the last three or four days.

What I said the other day about that dear rural spot at Rönhave must now sound like a dirge on its final downfall. The place is no more. Yesterday a huge column of smoke rose in the heavens on the north-western quarter of the horizon, and we were soon assured that the great barn and hay and straw lofts of Rönhave were on fire. I met Herr Rosen, the farmer, in company with the Ulkeböl parson, hastening to the spot, not with the faintest hope to avert, but simply to ascertain the extent of, the calamity. The farmhouse continued to burn from morning to evening, and its smoke, reddening in the glorious sunset, presented as sublime a spectacle as any I have yet witnessed in this war, which has been, however, so rich in sights of this nature.

The air has been very keen, but incredibly bright and pure, for the whole of this week, both night and day, and as I watched the fall of evening yesterday from the arbour behind the cluster of the Sönderborg windmills, I looked into nearly the whole extent of Söndeved and the adjacent seas, embracing at one glance the line of fire blazing away here and there in desultory flashes, unceasing, though sluggish and sullen. The column of red smoke of Rönhave was gradually darkening as daylight waned, and it towered in the sky a mere black phantom by the time the young moon had asserted her ascendancy over the star-lit firmament. The fate of Rönhave extended to several other farmhouses all along the Sound. The Prussians are bent on sweeping everything before them that lies in their way on the eastern side of the Strait, from Sönderborg to Arnkielsöre.

It will be some time before I forget the blank look with which good Mr. Rosen looked at me when I met him yesterday morning and asked him whether it was Rönhave that was burning, and the husky voice with which he gave his affirmative answer. It is not easy for a man to walk with a steady step towards his own home in flames, and such a happy home as Rönhave. We

met coming from the same direction several soldiers, and even a few peasants, being carried to the Augustenburg Hospital, wounded; for the Prussians are in no way particular, and they fired indiscriminately on the fugitives; but even the anguish of those death-spread countenances affected me less than the distraction of the poor man, the smoke of whose burning house darkened the sun in the sky. It takes so very much to shake the equanimity of these stout-hearted Northerners, or to surprise them into any unseemly exhibition of feeling.

When we read or hear the particulars of some great battle in which the dead and wounded are strewing the ground by hundreds and thousands, we are apt to think that we have become acquainted with war in its most appalling character, and that minor details are matters of commonplace interest. We speak indifferently of 'Bonaparte's second Italian War as the 'Campaign of Marengo,' of the subjugation of Austria by the First Napoleon as the 'Campaign' of Austerlitz.' General engagements, however, are merely the gala-days, the great shows and pageants of a war. Its real horrors must be sought in those obscure skirmishes, in those weary marches, in those unwholesome bivouacs, in all that complication and

aggravation of silent suffering of which history scarcely takes any note, and which, however, if set out in proper relief, would go further towards curing mankind of their combative and destructive propensities than any amount of carnage heaped up together in fair fight and in hot blood.

Here, for instance, we have this war in Denmark going on for the last two months and a half with scarcely any actual fighting. It will require no trifling flourish of trumpets to dignify such partial encounters as those of Büstrup or Oversö, or the attacks on Dybböl of the 17th and 28th into serious warlike events. There is no instance, as far as we have learnt, of more than two or three regiments being engaged on either side, and such affairs as we had to record are rather the results of the fortuitous falling in of the van of one army with the rear of the other, rather the inevitable brush between the outposts watching each other than the deliberate deed of one party marching out to meet the other, with full intent that one of the two should be driven, routed and annihilated, from the field.

Yet what amount of killing and wounding have the Danes and the Germans contrived, or are even now contriving, to go through without actual fighting! Our friendly officers come back from the bastions after their dreary night-work, and what a terrible tale of miserably wasted

lives have they not to tell! Here an officer of artillery, on his way to outposts, is struck down from his horse, and has to be carried back severely wounded; there another sits down at our table with his head bandaged, in consequence of some hard knock which has half fractured his skull. A major of infantry is crushed by a shell in his tent, where he sat writing in the midst of his encamped battalion. Another shell falls among a group of sleeping men, killing six and wounding one. These have become for us commonplace occurrences and matter of daily experience. It is thus, in driblets, without lifting a hand in its defence, that the Danish army is sinking, melting, as it were, before the fire of an invisible foe. The whole of yesterday we were stunned; the whole of last night we were kept awake by the incessant Prussian cannonade. One of their shells fell so very close to the great barn of the Sönderborg Ladegaard, my night-quarter, that every pane of glass in our windows rattled, and the whole house shook. About half-a-score more have kept up the game in the course of this forenoon. It is not every cannon-ball nor every shell that kills, thank Heaven! and all that terrible noise, which would seem to usher in the crack of doom, is found to have done much less harm than we anxious spectators had been led to apprehend. Still, the fire of the Prussians has

gained tenfold in intensity. The cannonade is five times as brisk; it is kept up with five times as great a constancy and assiduity. The result is, of course, proportionate to the increased exertion. The time was when the Prussians fired about 500 shot daily, when the average loss to the Danes was four or five dead or wounded. We even remember the day when the shells that fell were 1,000, and we had no casualty to deplore. Now the Prussians have encircled the Dybböl bastions with a line of fire, from which no less than 9,000 or 10,000 shells are showered on the Danes within the twenty-four hours; no wonder during that same period if from 90 to 100 men are conveyed to Sönderborg to be consigned to the cares of either surgeon or undertaker. On Monday the dead and wounded were 78; yesterday, 137. At the rate of 100 per day the returns of the Dybböl siege will soon swell to the proportions of one of the world's decisive battles; and it must not be forgotten that the armies by which gigantic battles were lost or won mustered their combatants by hundreds of thousands, while the army from which hundreds are subtracted daily hardly consisted of 18,000 men at the beginning of the siege, and has not been kept up to that mark, in spite of the reinforcements constantly sent up to it. Denmark is a small state, and all its war establishment was on a somewhat dimi-

nutive scale. There is no lack of humanity towards the wounded, as far as the means of the medical department extend, but these means are, unfortunately, inadequate to the exigences of the occasion. The sick and wounded are brought home in numbers for which the Government establishments were not prepared. The bombardment of Sönderborg has twice compelled the evacuation of the Castle Lazaret, of the Caroline Amelia School, and other improvised asylums of that nature. All the space that public or private charity provided for military sufferers at Augustenburg, Hörup, Tandslet, and in every village in the island, had been long since exhausted, and as I rode up to Hörup Hav this morning, I fell in with a long, very long train of country carts —a sad convoy of sick and wounded men, for whom no accommodation or attendance could be procured in any part of Alsen, and who must needs embark for Fünen or Zealand, although it is doubtful whether many, or, indeed, any of them are in a fit state for the voyage, or likely to reach their destination alive; although some of them evinced by their haggard countenances and writhing features the agony which the jolting of those clumsy conveyances inflicted, and others bore it with that apathy which is often only the result of suspended animation; although it is more than doubtful whether the hospitals of the

two larger islands and of Copenhagen itself will have any room to spare these poor wanderers, as all houses set apart for such purposes are already crowded to suffocation. No less than twelve corpses were this morning consigned to the churchyard turf at Augustenburg, all victims of the typhus fever, which has been raging for several days in the yards of the Slot-Lazaret. The worst calamities of war are weighing sorely on the devoted army of the Danes. No wonder if exhaustion begins to be perceptible in its scanty resources, no wonder if confusion manifests itself in its councils.

The Forts 4, 6, and 8 were almost utterly dismantled last night. Great efforts have been made to set them in tolerable repair in the morning, but the Prussian fire has acquired a deadly effect from long practice, and before six o'clock, the bastions were again a mass of ruins. A kind of sullen mutinous spirit begins to break out among the ambulance men—those fellows, 'merry as undertakers,' who were always singing the loudest. The wounded are in no danger of neglect on the part of their comrades, but the dead are not unfrequently left stiff and stark on the spot where they have fallen. The Danes have an average of 100 men *hors de combat* daily.

How long will it take at this rate before their small army is utterly wasted and used up?

I have also been assured that two regiments of the line showed some decided disinclination to march across the bridges at relieving time this morning, April 16. The men were heard murmuring that 'it seemed hard to have to submit to blind, passive butchery,' and wished that 'it were their lot to break out of the line of their bastions, to plunge into the midst of their foes, regardless of inequality of numbers, and join with them in a close struggle, in which they could at least take life for life, and enhance the Prussians their victory by the high price they would have to pay for it.' It was not to be so. The Danes must perish to a man, and their German enemies have it in their power to blow them from their guns with almost perfect impunity.

The discontent of the soldiers did not by any means amount to open mutiny, and, after a few encouraging words from the officers, the two regiments followed them without further remonstrance. All these, however, are new symptoms in the Danish army, and leave little doubt about the dolorous fact that demoralization creeps in. The men are with difficulty induced to keep a look-out at the loopholes of the bastions, disheartened, as they begin to be, by the destructive

fire of the Prussian rifles; and the rifle-pits at No. 2 have been for several days in the undisputed possession of the enemy.

A council of war was held last Sunday, the 10th, at Ulkeböl, where the assembled officers determined that the position shall be defended to the last drop of blood. It is a wholesale slaughter, with no other result than ultimate ruin; a sacrifice made to a point of honour which it is impossible not to respect, even for those who may be at a loss how to understand it. In some of the partial insurrections in the south of Europe, when a parcel of young students and other volunteers were put down by the disciplined armies of despots, all the consolation the conquered received at the hands of European opinion was 'that they were a pack of cravens,' and that no nation is entitled to the enjoyment of independent existence unless it is ready to fight for that greatest of blessings. 'Who would be free themselves should strike the blow.' This taunt can hardly be flung into the teeth of agonizing Denmark. Their soldiers are not only fighting like men — they fight as hardly any men fought before. Yet is there a hand in all Europe that will be raised to avert their fate or to avenge it?

The officers of the staff have again met on the

14th, to consider the expediency of a retreat from Dybböl. They have, it seems, orders from Copenhagen 'to hold on to the last.'

However stoutly determined to stand their ground even at Dybböl, the Danes do contemplate the possibility of their loss of that position, and are preparing against the worst contingencies. The retreat of their troops is being assured by the means of broad avenues across the fields, and by a number of rafts and pontoons, which would add to the efficiency of the bridges already in existence in facilitating the conveyance of troops across the water, while the advance of the enemy would be retarded by barricades, *abattis*, *chevaux-de-frise*, and such other contrivances as the modern art of war suggests. Should Dybböl fall, three or four days must elapse before the Prussians can advance their artillery and take new positions so as to be ready to push on their advantage across the Strait. By that time it is not impossible that the Conference may bring about an armistice, placing the armies *in statu quo*, in which event the Danes would, at the very worst, retain undisputed possession of the island. But there seems for the present little chance, I believe, of their being allowed to retire from Dybböl before the 20th.

CHAPTER V.

THE LAST DAYS.

Fall of Dybböl.—Danish Losses.—Prussian Vandalism.—The Danish Dead.—Desolation of Sönderborg.—The Dybböl Position.—Causes of its Fall.—Farewell to Alsen.

April 18-23.

THE last scene of this sad tragedy of the war in Denmark has been played out. Dybböl is lost. I have lived through one of the most painful days of my life, and, weary as I am, must needs attempt to describe the impressions I have received, so far as my mental and physical strength will allow me.

I slept last night at the Sönderborg Ladegaard, the large farmhouse which has been my abode for the last fortnight. Just as we were about to retire for the night, at about eleven o'clock, a rumour reached us, to which we paid no great attention, that the Dybböl position had become untenable, and that the Danish army would steal out of it and come across the bridges before morning. The condition to which the Dybböl bastions had been reduced allowed no hopes of a

prolonged resistance. Nos. 1 and 2 had long since ceased to exist; they were not only dismantled and silenced, but were actually blotted out of the line. Nos. 3 and 4, the latter the key to the whole position, had barely three or four cannon left between the two. The rifle-pits outside these forts had fallen into the enemy's hands, and between the palisades of the forts and the Prussian outposts an interval of barely 500 yards intervened, totally forsaken by the Danish pickets. The whole of the Danish left was defenceless, and no less disheartening news reached us of the condition of the right. That the Danes in such a plight might feel inclined to withdraw their forces in the night was, indeed, by no means incredible; but whether such an attempt was at all likely to be successful, with the enemy so close at hand, and with a moonlight as bright as day, was a very different question. At all events, orders had come from Copenhagen that 'the army should stand its ground to the last.' The brave troops had no hope of conquering, they had even no chance to fight, but were determined to do what still remained in their power—to die.

I was awakened several times in the night by a most fearful cannonade, and in the morning, towards four o'clock, by an infantry fire, rather

slack and desultory, but so loud and distinct, owing to the perfect stillness of the pure night air, that I thought for a moment the enemy had attempted a landing on the coast near the Ladegaard, and the fight had been brought close under my windows. As the morning advanced, April 18th, however, we were somewhat reassured. There was a foolish notion in the Danish camp, that if the enemy did not make his onset before break of day he would not come on at all, and, thinking the thundering noise of the cannonade portended no more serious evil than what the last three or four weeks have accustomed us to, at about eight o'clock I was in the saddle with a friend and rode to Hörup Hav to post our letters in time for the morning mail. We rode to Hörup Hav, proceeded thence across country to Augustenburg, and thence, after an hour's rest, turned our horses' heads towards head-quarters at Ulkeböl. Here we met two brother correspondents, who gave us tidings that Forts Nos. 3 and 4 were in the hands of the Prussians, and that the enemy, master of the whole left of the position, was turning all his efforts to dislodge the Danes from the right. The fire at this time was something so terrific as to baffle all powers of description. The cannon thundered all along the line. No less than three houses were burning at Kjœr and Ulkeböl Westermark, as the columns of

smoke, rising pillar-like, unmoved and steady in the calm heavens, had informed us during all our hitherward progress from Augustenburg. We left Ulkeböl, and, striking across country, round the northern end of what was still standing of the town of Sönderborg, we made our best way towards our quarters at the Ladegaard. From every part of the Dybböl heights and from Broagerland a perfect hail of rattling shells crossed each other on those miserable ruins of Sönderborg. They vaulted over the town, and whizzed and whirred in every direction far and wide over the fields. As we gained an extensive view of the Vemming Bund, we saw the Rolf Krake putting up steam and making straight for the Prussian right, but her bow was soon wrapped in smoke; the gallant ironclad had been hit at her prow, she was seen to stagger and reel, and she presently put back pursued by the enemy's fire till she reached her safe anchorage, from which she did not, I believe, again stir for the rest of the day. As we went on to our destination we found our position in the saddle unsafe; we alighted, and led our horses by the bridle, watching the shells as they came, ready to dodge them in the event of our evil star leading us in their way. The fire that was directed against the Rolf-Krake reached far beyond and above its mark. The shells showered thickly about the

Ladegaard, and, having rid ourselves of our steeds, we were compelled to fall back, and to gain a neighbouring height near the Storeskov, from which a good look-out could still be obtained. We now turned our face towards Dybböl Hill, and from the high ground we stood upon surveyed the whole scene of the fight.

After their heavy cannonade of the night and morning the Prussians had at last ventured upon an assault on the left, and by a mere rush upon the shattered ramparts of No. 3 and No. 4, at about ten o'clock in the morning, they had, in ten minutes, overcome such feeble resistance as the Danish infantry offered them, and from the place we occupied we could distinctly see the standard they had triumphantly hoisted on the latter-named of those bastions. The Danes, unable to make any further resistance, had spiked the very few cannon that could still be of any use; but the Prussians had moved forward their artillery, and having by this time (twelve o'clock) possessed themselves also of the forts on the right, they were blazing away from a four or five miles' circle of fire at the *tête de pont*, the only remaining stronghold of the Danes across the water, at the bridges, at the town and castle of Sönderborg, at its Church battery, at the South

Windmill battery, and at all that still remained of the poor flimsy batteries all along the Sound. Their object was to carry everything at once with a high hand, to cut off the retreat of the routed Danish army at Dybböl, and to clear the ground all along the Sound on the Alsen side, so as to force their way across. We had scarcely taken our position at the entrance of the wood when a terrific explosion attracted our attention to the South Windmill Battery, placed half way between the Slot or Castle in the town and the Ladegaard, consequently, not more than half-a-mile from where we stood—the powder magazine was blown into the air. By one of the greatest blunders of these poor infatuated Danes, who judged of distances by the range of their old-fashioned artillery; they deemed themselves so perfectly sure on the side of Broagerland that the magazines of all their forts and batteries had their doors on that side. The consequences of this oversight were terrific at the Windmill Battery. The mill was in a blaze in two minutes; so were three or four houses in the immediate neighbourhood. The mill, which was thatched all over, blazed up like a great red-glaring pillar of fire in the breathless air, and its smoke and that of the adjoining houses soon hid the battle-field from our view. Through the gaps in that dense vapour, however, we descried large patches of

the undulating grounds of Dybböl Hill and tracts of the road sloping down from the Dybböl Windmill height, and along that road large masses of the Danish infantry retreating in good order, though mowed down by tens and scores by the murderous fire of the Prussian cannon. All across the fields in the distance we could also descry squadrons of German horse hastening to fall on the rear of the retiring Danes. The whole line of ten forts was lost almost without a struggle, and its routed defenders hoped to have still a chance of showing fight at the *tête de pont*. But those feeble Danish works, those slender ramparts, those hastily-reared palisades were hardly intended to resist the fury of the overwhelming Prussian fire. The Danish staff officers were soon aware that the day was lost, and, relinquishing all idea of Dybböl, and thinking it was still in their power to make a stand in Alsen, they broke up their bridges and cut off the retreat from their own troops. Had they done otherwise, there is little doubt but Danes and Prussians, the conquerors and the vanquished, would have forced their way across those bridges together, pell-mell, when one single day, and almost one hour, would have decided the fate of the Danish army on either side of the Strait. As it was, no less than three regiments were sacrificed, and I heard more than one officer say that Denmark

might well thank her stars if no more than 3,000 men had been lost between dead, wounded, and prisoners in the morning rout across the water. General Du Plat, commanding a division, was reported among the dead. Major Rosen, the Second Chief of the Staff, one of the bravest officers, and most amiable to us gentlemen of the press, was also said to have fallen—not dead, as we were at first told, but wounded—into the hands of the enemy. Of the 18th Regiment *not one officer survived.* The Danes were for several days fully aware that their shattered and almost annihilated works could be taken at a run by columns of such strength as it was by no means in the power of their scanty and worn-out battalions to withstand. Had the voice of their bravest but most discreet officers been listened to, the long-impending catastrophe might either have been avoided by a timely withdrawal from Dybböl, or by an honourable capitulation, or it might at least have been ennobled by a desperate sortie. That we were in daily expectation of some sad tragic issue out of the difficulties in which the Danes were placed, the reader of my foregoing letters must easily have perceived. Guarded as my language must needs be, lest any imprudent revelation should further damage the already too critical position of this army, and lest I should be charged with abusing the confidence that its

leaders had in all foreign correspondents, it must, however, have been sufficiently clear to foreshadow coming events. The Danes were for a long time fighting with the hearts of men who not only despaired of victory, but who had even lost all expectation of ever gaining a glimpse of the enemy that was in front of them. Day by day they buried their dead and carried home their wounded, with the certainty that hardly any loss whatever had been inflicted on the overbearing foe. They did not shrink from duty; they did not loudly complain; they did not even murmur at being sent forth to that unavailing butchery; but they knew that as the army was dwindling away daily and falling piecemeal, so the day would come in which it would be slaughtered wholesale, in which the Prussians would shoot them all down before them as game at a *battue*, and actually, as I before said, 'blow them from their guns.' What the actual loss of the Danes in dead and wounded may have been we have not as yet the means to ascertain, but, for my part, I have little hesitation in asserting that at least one half of the army was left on the other side of the bridges, and that, although many may have chosen to 'break rather than bend,' by far the greatest part fell living into the enemy's hands. As to the Prussian loss, it was, no doubt, comparatively trifling. Their formid-

able artillery gave them the advantage of their adversaries. They used their advantage *à l'outrance;* they simply 'took' the Dybböl position; they fired, but hardly fought for it.

Dybböl was lost, but the battle was by no means at an end. Indeed, as we watched the terrible cannonade from twelve at noon till three or four P.M., the violence of the fire seemed to increase at every moment. Anything more sublime than that sight and sound no effort of imagination can conjure up, and we stood spell-bound, entranced, rooted to the spot, in a state that partook of wild excitement and dumb amazement—a state of being which spread equally to the dull hinds, ploughmen, woodmen, and the foresters, and their families of wives and children, as they emerged from fields, woods, and huts, and clustered in awestruck, dumbfoundered groups around us. The flashes of the heavy artillery outsped the rapidity of the glance that strove to watch them; the reports were far more frequent than the pulsation in our arteries, and the reverberation of the thunder throughout the vast spreading forest lengthened out and perpetuated the roar with a solemn cadence that was the grandest of all music even to the dullest ear. The air seemed all alive with those angry shells. I have witnessed

fearful thunderstorms in my days in Southern and in tropical climates, but here the crash and the rattle of all the tempests that ever were seemed to be summed up in the tornado of an hour. Nor was all that noise by any means deafening or stunning. It came to us lingering far and wide in the still air, softened and mellowed by the vastness of space, every note blending admirably, and harmonizing with the general concert —the greatest treat that the most consummate pyrotechnic art could possibly contrive for the delight of the eye and ear.

We had to tear ourselves from this sad spectacle. We rode across the woods to Lambjerg and Vollerup, and once more went up to headquarters at Ulkeböl. The farmhouse at Morgenstjern was deserted, and only a few orderlies with led horses still tarried on the spot. Even General Gerlach, the Commander-in-Chief, who had scarcely recovered the consequences of a bad fall from his horse, had himself carried out to the front, I believe, in an arm-chair. Cartloads of officers' luggage evidently spoke of a general flitting; but all along the road from Sönderborg, from Ulkeböl, from Rönhave, other cartloads met us at every step, and we well knew the melancholy convoy that from every direction wended its slow way towards the pier of Hörup Hav. No less than 600 wounded left this day before even-

ing in a single steamer; 200 or 300 more were left behind on the strand for want of accommodation, and by far the greatest part of these 800 or 900 had been struck, not on the field at Dybböl, but on the Alsen coast, where the Church and Windmill Batteries, the breastworks before Sönderborg, and those lining the shore along the Sound, had to withstand the fire hurled at them by the Prussians, already masters of the opposite heights. The aim of the Prussians was, as I before said, so to sweep everything before them as to have a clear field for such operations as might enable them to cross over in the evening. Already Sönderborg—or the ruins of what was once Sönderborg—was smoking and burning from end to end. Destructive fires were equally laying waste whatever was left of the farmhouses along there. The Danish batteries returned their fire manfully, and the infantry stood their ground with their wonted obstinacy. At every turning of the road, from every hamlet, through every gap in the woods, small detachments of troops marched forth, ready at the call of their leaders to join in the affray of which the noise alone would have driven almost any other soldiers to flight. Steady and collected they came on, their officers at their head, unappalled by the smallness of their numbers, unmoved by the livid faces and wandering eyes of the wounded that

met them by hundreds in the ambulance carts, unsubdued by the reminiscence of the power of that artillery which had so long spread destruction among their ranks, and against which they were aware all their valour was of no avail. The Danish army died as it had lived; it had been sent here to be slaughtered for the honour of the country, and to the slaughter it went—not with a cheerful, but certainly with a nobly resigned, undaunted mien. Surely these men were worthy of a better fate!

So far as we can judge from our own observation, or as we can hear from common report, the Prussians have as yet been unable to force their way across the Strait. The thunder of their artillery began to abate at sunset, and had ceased altogether before nine or ten in the evening.

I am now, twelve o'clock at midnight, at Hörup Hav, on board the little steamer 'Hadesle,' bound for Assens, in Fünen, to-morrow morning, and the letter I am now writing shall be intrusted to her mail bags. Should the Prussians have gained a footing in the island, I should consider my task as a correspondent at Danish headquarters at an end, and I should follow my own letter in the same vessel. As that, however, appears at this moment improbable, I

shall be again in the saddle early in the morning, when I hope to be able to gather fresher and minuter particulars of the catastrophe of this day, and to be a witness of any events that may follow.

I was early in the saddle this morning, 19th, as I had purposed, and used my best diligence to learn all particulars respecting that fall of Dybböl, about which I gave a hasty and somewhat crude report in my last night's letter. I was able to ascertain that the taking of the bastions on the left was effected almost without fighting. General Gerlach has long been ailing, and the officers of the Staff, harassed by incessant duty at outposts, were so utterly worn out as to be almost altogether unable to take the responsibilities of the supreme command upon themselves. The little Danish army, engaged in so arduous and desperate a task, laboured under the further disadvantage of being without a head. I am very reluctant to believe what I hear, but I am assured that while the forts had fallen into the enemy's hands soon after ten, the certain news of the disaster only reached head-quarters at half-past twelve. Possibly some of the aides-de-camp were shot down on their way from the Dybböl heights to the bridges. Possibly, also, Major

Stjernholm, who has known no rest for many a weary night, was overcome by a sleep which his attendants were unwilling to disturb. Major Rosen, the second in command at the Staff, was out at Dybböl, whence his dead body was only sent back this afternoon. The fire of the Prussian cannon was so very violent that the men on the bastions hardly ventured to be on the look-out. The Prussians came up, and the Danes withdrew; that is the whole history of the fall of Dybböl.

Somewhat longer resistance, I am told, was made at the *tête de pont*. But the Prussian artillery was turned against it from the captured hill-crests, and nothing was left but to cut off all communication between Sönderved and Alsen by the destruction of the bridges. The battalions of Danish infantry, enveloped by large German masses, shattered by a perfect whirlwind of shells, cut off from all retreat, had but little chance of resistance. One general, six colonels or lieutenants-colonels, and thirty-three officers of lower rank fell dead. The loss among the men cannot yet be ascertained. We may judge of it by the laws of proportion. The number of men left on the other side of the bridges is somewhat vaguely stated at 2,000, 4,000, and even 7,000 or 8,000. These are the dead, wounded, or missing on a field where there hardly was any action.

There was not a man in his senses who was not for a long time prepared for some such dreadful catastrophe. That Dybböl should be abandoned, and the attempt made to remove its defenders by stealth in the night, was the opinion firmly entertained by all officers mature in the art of war. That opinion was fully and unreservedly shared by the men at head-quarters. The destruction of the Danish army was the result of sheer political improvidence.

Between one and two o'clock in the afternoon, I stood on the summit of one of those earth-mounds which give the landscape in this country a peculiar character, and whence I obtained a very extensive view of the opposite Dybböl heights. At the Bastions Nos. 3, 4, 10, and others, large bodies of Prussian troops were seen massed together, as if in battle array. Presently, long columns of infantry began to advance from the Dybböl road, the Sattrup road, and all the other avenues converging on the *tête de pont*. Down they came, leisurely, their colours flying in the air, perfectly heedless of the batteries on the Alsen side, several of which, truly, were merely a heap of ruins, but one of which, at least, the Church Battery, armed with sixteen large guns, was in good fighting condition, could

sweep at pleasure the whole extent of the open fields opposite, and might have crushed those descending Prussian battalions by hundreds. I was perfectly thunderstruck at the inaction of the Danes on this occasion, and inquired of all I met as to the cause, but either met with flat disbelief of my assertions, or the only explanation I had was, that 'there was no one about to give orders, and the cannons could not go off of themselves.'

It may be, however, that the Danes were held in check by the appearance of a *parlementaire* who was marching in the van of all these columns; but, at the time, the Prussian batteries were still firing lustily from Rageböl, and, at all events, it seemed to me rather strange that the advance of whole divisions should take place during the negotiations for a truce. The armistice, however (*waffen-ruhe*), was agreed upon between the parties, and was to last till seven o'clock in the evening. I profited by the respite, rode round and into Sönderborg, and by standing on the arbour in the garden, among the northern windmills, which, as I often said, is my best observatory on this side of the Sound, I saw that the Prussian columns were broken up, and all that mass of men was swarming freely over the slope of the hill, down to the waterside, till close to the spot where the bridges so lately stood, *i. e.*

120 to 150 yards from the castle and piers of Sönderborg. That mere ditch of sea water is all that now separates the Danes from the invading enemy.

A bustle in the crowd attracted me to the landing-place on our side, where a melancholy sight awaited me. A boat, bearing Prussian colours, had rowed across, bearer of some of the bodies of Danish officers killed in the affair of yesterday, which the enemy gave up to their comrades for funeral honours. That first load was followed by others, up to the number of thirty-six corpses. The bare carcases were almost all that was sent back of those gloriously-fallen warriors. Not only were their pockets turned inside out, but the buttons of their coats, which were deemed to be silver, but were only *German* silver (possibly current as silver among Germans), had been torn or cut off, and all the corpses had been robbed of their boots. That there should be marauders about the Prussian tents should be no wonder, for the Danish army is unique in the perfect security reigning in its whereabouts; but surely the Prussian authorities, if they meant to play a courteous and generous part towards a fallen foe, ought to have set a guard of honour round those remains, and not

suffered them to be desecrated by the ruffians prowling about their camp.

The truce expired last evening at seven o'clock, and the Prussian cannonade instantly recommenced. It soon languished, however, towards sunset, and nothing of importance occurred during the night. It is rather early at the present juncture to calculate the chances of the Germans coming across the water and terminating their enterprise by the conquest of the Isle of Als. It may greatly depend on their own inclination to attempt the passage, and on the disposition of the Danes to dispute it. Yesterday there was hardly a man in the whole Danish army who was not half dead with fatigue, and who did not seem to have grown twenty years older in one day with chagrin and humiliation. But a night's rest has done wonders among them, and, were they only well led, the island might be no easy prey even to an enemy flushed with his recent too easy victory.

General Gerlach moved his quarters last evening from Ulkeböl to the Hörup Prestegaard; he will presently embark for Fünen. His successor will probably be the General of Division Steinman.

Poor Major Rosen! A braver or an abler officer was not to be found in the whole Danish army. His promotion to his present rank dates from a week back, and was granted in remuneration of signal services. I met his brother, my friend, Farmer Rosen, of Rönhave, last evening, at Hörup. The sorrow on his countenance made a deeper impression on my soul than all the ghastly wounds with which the last two months have made me familiar. I durst not address him. This day the body of his brother was laid before him. Only yesterday his sweet home at Rönhave and all his substance was a prey to the flames. Himself and family have no other shelter than what the hospitality of friends tenders them. There let them live down their sorrows and repair their losses as they can! Yet these Rosens are Holsteiners, born and bred; but the Crown of Denmark has nowhere more loyal or valiant subjects. Their devotion to their country's cause cost them dear. But these are only some of those sad episodes of war to which no chapter of history is dedicated.

The belligerents here seem to anticipate the resolutions of the Conference in London. The armies have suspended hostilities to allow time for the diplomatists to agree on the terms of an

armistice. All was quiet on Tuesday, at about one or two in the afternoon, at the time the Prussian *parlementaire* rowed across the strait conveying the bodies of the Danish officers who were restored to their friends for interment. The truce has, virtually, hardly been broken since.

The unutterable relief of a quiet day, beautifully harmonizing with the still, spring weather, could only be appreciated by men who had been, as we have, so long distracted, by the din of that horrid cannonade. I rode from Hörup Hav, and after spending the morning at some officers' quarters at Klinting, Overförsterbolig, and other charming sylvan spots, I turned my horse's head to the Sönderborg Ladegaard and proceeded along the shore past the shattered South Windmill Battery to the long unvisited southern parts of the bombarded town. From the Ladegaard to the Slot I did not meet one living being, and hardly four or five persons at the upper end of the town. I did not know what to make out of all that mute terror, and its contrast with the perfect calmness and apparent security around me was even more appaling than all the noise of the Prussian fire had hitherto been. Opposite to me, across the water, on the other shore, the German soldiers were idling near their piled-up muskets. I was for about ten minutes at 200 yards' distance from them, and I avow that my

heel came almost involuntarily into contact with my horse's side and urged him into a smart trot. It was only when the ruin of the castle and of the lower buildings were between me and those accursed rifles that I breathed freely; for about a formal armistice not a word has been said, and rifles *will* occasionally go off by mistake.

As I ascended the steep and narrow street leading to the Town Hall my very horse was startled at the change that had taken place among those haunts, as familiar to him as to myself; he was startled at the sound of his own hoofs on the desolate pavement, and shied fearfully at the blackened rubbish from the fallen houses strewn across his path. There was not a soul to be seen among the ruins up to and beyond the Reymuth Hotel. Pauline herself had finally quitted the premises on the 19th, and was now probably at her native home near Aabenraa. One-third of the town, as I told you, had been rendered totally uninhabitable by the forty-eight hours' bombardment of the 2nd and 3rd. The subsequent desultory fire has demolished fully another third.

I did not tarry long in that dreary solitude, but found, on emerging into the Ulkeböl road, every spot equally deserted; the garden arbour among

the windmills, our favourite watch-tower, had not one idler on its summit, and barely two or three soldiers ventured to peep over the brow of the hill, screened by its slope. There was something in that silence of the Prussians that was by no means reassuring, and that vague, indefinite danger seemed to cast a stronger spell than it had before exercised in its visible and tangible form. I was bound to Ulkeböl Church, where I knew the bodies of the thirty-six officers fallen on the last day at Dybböl had been deposited. A cursory view of the melancholy relics, as they lay stowed in the boats, had satisfied me that their pockets, as I before said, had been rifled, the lace from their collars and shoulder-straps, and their buttons torn or cut off, and the boots taken from the dead men's feet. But at Ulkeböl Church several of the bodies had been stripped of all clothing, others had their garments hanging about in disorder, the stiffness of the lifeless limbs having apparently baffled the efforts of the spoiler, who had tugged at them to take them off. Two of the corpses had their fingers cut off, of course for the sake of their rings.

The sight was a ghastly and miserable one to the most unconcerned. It was very sad to me who had been for so long a time on friendly terms with so many of those nobly dead. Rosen, Lassons, Dreyer, and so many others, had shaken

hands with me only as they went to outposts on the Sunday evening, and here they were with shattered skull or pierced breast, most of their countenances composed to that calm and sweet solemnity which is usual with persons dying of gunshot wounds, yet some also, with their features hardly relaxing from the wild fierce look with which they stared at death on their last gasp. The reader need not fear any intention on my part to dwell on horrors. My Danish friends are in a state of great exasperation, and strange stories circulate about the camp of 'officers and men slaughtered in cold blood by the Prussians,' 'of no quarter being given, when asked,' &c. War is war in all countries and under all circumstances, and the Prussians have certainly shown themselves no better civilized or disciplined beings than other people. The bombardment of Sönderborg and the stripping of dead officers they will certainly have to answer for; but the taking of Dybböl was attended by no hand-to-hand slaughter. The Danes were simply mowed down by shells, grape-shot, and rifle-balls in their retreat. Any bayonet thrust would be tantamount to murder, and there are ugly gashes in some of the corpses at Ulkeböl that seem really to have been made by cold steel. A few instances in which brave men have been dealt with by the Prussians with all the respect due to unfortunate

valour, are also widely circulated. A young artillery officer, Lieutenant Ankœr, has been taken especial notice of by the superior officers in the enemy's army.

The body of General Du Plat, together with those of several other officers, was conveyed across the strait yesterday, 21st, by the Prussians. General Du Plat has been the real hero of the Dybböl day. He was at the rear of his retreating columns, and, taking the lead of a few of his men, was showing a bold front to the enemy, when he was struck by several rifle-balls, and fell. His followers were instantly at his side, and endeavoured to lift him up; but he declined all assistance, saying he was a dead man, and begging his friends to hold out as long as it was possible against the overwhelming Germans. His wishes were obeyed, and he sank back to all appearance lifeless; but he lifted himself up again by a last effort, and his voice was still heard, repeating, 'Hold out, my friends! Hold out, for God and Denmark!' It was at this moment that Major Rosen, informed of the General's fall, came up; but he had hardly reached the spot when he was stretched by the side of his dead friend, mortally wounded.

General Du Plat's corpse had two laurel

wreaths round its head when it came into its friends' hands, and these, the Prussian officer who came across with it informed us, were laid on the brow of the dead hero by no less illustrious hands than those of Prince Frederick Charles and Marshal Wrangel, who wished to show before the eyes of their whole army in what estimation they held an enemy's valour. Pity the General's gallantry did not entitle him to have his boots restored to him; but the Germans are evidently mad after Danish shoe-leather, and the bodies of all, without exception, who fell on the Dybböl heights, were brought back to us in their socks. I was yesterday again at Ulkeböl Church, and looked more calmly on the bodies with which the pavement of that large, rural, ecclesiastic edifice was strewn. I had been, on the previous evening, taken to the spot by some Danes, whose excitement wrought powerfully on my own roused feelings, and made me, as it were, see with their own eyes. Upon a second survey matters hardly seemed to bear the same aspect, though what I beheld, even in full daylight, was sufficiently shocking. All objects of value, rings, watches, breast-pins, &c., had, as a matter of course, been taken from the dead, and all the gold and silver lace on their collars, shoulder-straps, &c., had been diligently cut off. Most of the buttons of the officer's coats (which looked like silver) had also

been deemed lawful prey; but the clothes themselves had only in rare instances been stripped off, and in others greatly disarranged, as if the spoiler had thought of removing them; but had either given up the job as unprofitable, or had been interrupted in his work. Major Rosen's body, and those of some of his comrades were, indeed, as I had said, stripped to their shirts; but these were found dying, not dead, on the field, and were, in all probability, removed to a hospital, and there undressed for bed. Colonel Lasson had his thumb struck off, certainly, and his friends and acquaintances assure me that he used to wear a large signet ring on it. The thumb, however, may have been accidentally struck, as well as designedly cut off, and the valuable bauble was, perhaps, lost, and not stolen. But, at all events, as I said in my foregoing letter, similar accidents are but commonplace episodes of human warfare. There is only one army in Europe where the raiment and ornaments of the dead are not deemed lawful spoil for the victors or for the marauders prowling at their heels in every camp; that exception to the rule is the Danish army, which has no camp followers whatever, of either bad or even doubtful character, and the lowest of whose soldiers is deeply imbued with that veneration for the dead which is carried almost to superstition in his country. The Dane

cannot conceive how a Prussian would not rather walk a thousand miles barefoot than step into a dead man's shoes; and the deplorable condition in which the corpses of their best officers were returned to them was attributed to brutal Vandalism and reckless irreverence on the part of their foes. That there are no bad characters, nor even any ill-disposed men among the Danes, is a fact of which the experience of the last three months has fully convinced every person who has been with them since the outbreak of the war. Both here, throughout the island, and on the other side, at Dybböl, and throughout the retreat from Schleswig to Sönderborg, I have been moving freely, at all hours of the day and night, unarmed, unattended, in the most lonely spots, not only without meeting with any unpleasant accident, but without the least suspicion or apprehension of harm. I hardly ever passed a soldier without receiving either a friendly '*God dag*,' or the conventional salute of military respect. I have never witnessed a quarrel, never heard even high words, either between the soldiers themselves, or between them and the hospitable peasantry upon whom they were quartered. I am not aware of even the slightest attempt at overreaching or imposition on the part of any person with whom I have dealt; no advantage has been taken of my most pressing wants, or of

the disproportion between demand and supply. Indeed, if I have any fault to find, it is rather with the supineness and lack of enterprise which seemed to paralyze the speculating energies of shop and hotel keepers, and deterred them from refurnishing their exhausted stores, either for our comfort or for their own emolument, even if they could turn an honest penny by it. Kindness can get anything you wish from the Danes, but money is no temptation.

It is, perhaps, because the Danish nation is too good for this world that the Germans have undertaken to blot it out of it; and they will go through with their work, probably, because Europe seems too indifferent to what becomes of the small members of its community, trodden under the heel of their powerful neighbours, and, on the other hand, because the Danes themselves, or their Government, by their overstrained point of honour, by their stiff pride and uncompromising obstinacy, are perhaps hastening their fate and making their ruin complete and irreparable.

We have sad news from the Rolf-Krake. The two shells, which, on the 18th, broke through her deck, only protected by plate one-inch-and-a-half thick, killed a young officer, wounding several men, and throwing everything below into

that confusion which compelled the ironclad to an immediate retreat.

I rode back from Ulkeböl to Wollerup and Hörup, and neither on that nor on any other road did I see large bodies of troops, such as used to encumber every thoroughfare before the fall of Dybböl—when at least four regiments were always encamped on the other side of the water. What I met was merely a few stragglers, way-worn and dispirited. 'Where,' I asked of myself, 'is the Danish army?' To this question I can obtain no satisfactory answer. Possibly one-half of it is in Söndeved, captive in the hands of the Prussians, and the other half has been, or is daily and hourly, 'stealing away.' Yet everybody assures me no more than 3,000 or 4,000 men were missing on Monday last, and the Isle of Alsen is to be defended to the last extremity!

One more quiet letter from the Isle of Alsen—unless the reader thinks that there have already been too many of them—one more letter before I quit the spot, never perhaps to revisit it. The Prussians have taken Dybböl, and they have the rest at their mercy; but little interest can henceforth attach to the Danish war, even if it be suf-

fered to continue, without either the interruption of an armistice, or the more effectual stop of a peace. Dybböl is taken, and the Danes are defeated; the catastrophe that was so long impending has at last occurred: it may, perhaps, be worth while yet to sum up the causes which made it inevitable, and the circumstances which put it off so long, and which made it for some time and in the minds of some people a matter of doubtful issue.

The Isle of Alsen was a fortress in the sea, only to be approached by land by an enemy who could boast of no naval superiority on his side, through the narrow Peninsula of Dybböl, which was to the little island such an outwork as was the Fort of Malghera across the Lagoon to the stronghold of Venice, during the memorable siege of 1848–9.

The whole Dybböl position was merely a *tête de pont* to Alsen, from which it is separated by a river-like Sound of a width varying between 130 and 1,000 yards.

The Dybböl position consisted of four distinct lines. First there was the *tête de pont* proper, immediately across the water, a narrow gorge or defile, winding between two hills of moderate height, and flanked on either side by two batteries, and barred by a double range of palisades. Be-

yond that, after an esplanade of about half-a-mile, there was the second line, or Dybböl line proper, on Dybböl Hill, consisting of ten forts, disposed on a somewhat circular line—from No. 1, close to the water-edge, on the Vemming Bund, to No. 10, at a very little distance from the Alsund shore. The Dybböl Windmill was nearly in the middle of this arc, somewhat in the rear of forts Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7, and close to the main road leading from Sönderborg to Nyböl, Graasten, and Flensburg. The third line was made by the broad skirts and summit of the Avnbjerg, by the village of Dybböl, and by the somewhat broken and uncleared ground of Rageböl. The fourth line was drawn across the two woods called Stenterupskov and Boffel Kobbel, lining the abovesaid road on either side, and stretching to Dybböllund and Stendbjerg on one side, and to Ragebölskov and Ravns Kobbel on the other. All these four lines stretched out in concentric arcs, and had their centre at the Sönderborg bridges, from which they were placed at the respective distance of half-a-mile, one mile, a mile-and-a-half, and two miles; about half-a-mile from the fourth line was Nyböl, where the Germans had their outposts, and at the southern end of the fourth line was the isthmus which joined the little peninsula of Broagerland to the mainland of Sönderved. This Dybböl position taken alto-

gether was very strong by nature. The Danes had, in 1849, only fortified the first and second line; they bravely defended the latter, and after this was lost they maintained themselves on the former, or *tête de pont*, whence, in time, they issued forth to give battle to the enemy, and forced him to raise the siege.

Little or nothing had been done this year towards improving the natural strength of the spot at the time that the army came to it for refuge on the 8th of February. All the power and energy of Denmark was spent in the construction of the Dannewerk, and it was only after the sudden loss of that stronghold that her attention was turned to this last bulwark of her declining fortunes in Schleswig. When the Danes set to work to fortify Alsen and Dybböl, they only thought of restoring their old bastions and batteries of 1849. On the Söndeved side they rebuilt their first and second lines, and only occupied the third and fourth with their outposts. They did not pay sufficient attention to the momentous changes that had taken place in the art of war during these last fourteen years; they took into no account the wider range of that modern artillery with which they were, perhaps, not acquainted—with which, at any rate, they were not supplied. On his first onset the enemy took undisputed possession of Broagerland, a possession which he held

during the siege, in spite of a somewhat feeble effort of the Danes to cut off his communication at the Egernsund-bridge, and to attack him at the isthmus. The possession of the peninsula enabled the Prussians to send their shells from Broager, Gammelsmark, and the whole coast across the Vemming Bund, to the annoyance not only of the whole Dybböl position, but of the island itself, and especially of the town of Sönderborg. The loss of the peninsula in a very short time brought about that of the fourth line. The Danish outposts of Boffel Kobbel, Stenterupskov, and Rageböl were exposed to incessant surprises, and, after the loss of many prisoners, the Danes drew in their pickets within the third line, at the Avnbjerg and Dybböl village. This inner line was bravely defended against repeated attacks, but the time came in which the Prussians took possession of it, and the efforts of the Danes to dislodge them miscarried. The war was now reduced to the Dybböl position proper—*i. e.* to the second and first lines, those lines which had been triumphantly held in 1849, and on which alone art had added its contrivances to complete the work of nature.

The second line, however, had, from the very beginning, been grievously harassed by the fire from the Broagerland batteries, batteries which did not exist, nor were even dreamt of, in the

former war. Subsequently to the cannonade, which was already doing some harm from the south, was added the fire from the positions of the Avnbjerg, Dybböl village, and Rangeböl, abandoned to the Prussians, and the result of four weeks' incessant cannonading was the almost total wreck, and the too easy storming of the ten bastions. After the fall of the bastions, the loss of the *tête de pont* was an affair rather of minutes than hours, and it was only owing to the unaccountable forbearance of the Prussians that one and the same day did not give Alsen as well as Dybböl into their hands.

Although the position of Dybböl, under the very best circumstances, could not be called impregnable, still its loss might have been indefinitely put off, had the Danes commanded such numbers, and brought such artillery into the field, as would have enabled them to make the best of the whole of the four lines. Had they been able to defend the bridge at Egernsund, either by land or sea forces, and take a strong hold of the isthmus so as to keep their foes out of the Broager Peninsula, a great deal of blood and time must needs have been spent by the Prussians in that preliminary operation; and had the Danes either

destroyed the Stenterup and Boffel woods, or defended them inch by inch, or, in the worst case, built their outworks on the Avnbjerg and Dybböl village, the enemy's progress would have been considerably retarded; but, in order to do that, a larger army was, perhaps, indispensable. Possibly the Danes were as unequal to that task as they were to that of manning the Dannewerk. Possibly, also, their reliance on the strength of the narrower line was too blind, or they acted with too much of their overweening confidence, remissness, and slowness. When the contest was reduced to the ten bastions of the second line, the terrible odds that were brought to bear against the Danes, owing to the mere superiority of the enemy's cannon, became immediately apparent. The fire from Broagerland could not otherwise be resisted by the Danes than by 'decking,' or *ducking* under it, and the harm done to their works could only be repaired by incessant labour and vigilance; but when the fire from the left was crossed by fire from the centre and the right, when no shelter could be found from the hail of shells falling at the rate of ten, twenty, and even fifty a minute, and breastworks, traverses, and the bastions themselves were blown into the air like mere *papier mâché* gimcrackery, the Danes had nothing left but to die at their post, and this they did with a devo-

tion and heroism which will not soon be forgotten.

It has been asked—and the question was repeatedly put by myself—why 'the defence of the Danes had not been less of a passive and more of an energetic nature;' why 'they had never harassed their enemy in his siege works;' why 'no sorties had been made against the working parties,' and why 'every parallel had been established almost without molestation.' The answer is very easy. Simply because the Danes could at no time be a match for their enemy's numbers in the open field, and because their artillery had no chance with that of the Prussians. When the Avnbjerg and Dybböl village were taken on the 17th of March, an effort was made in the same evening to recover those positions at the point of the bayonet. But the two Danish battalions which were put forward at that juncture found themselves in collision with two German brigades. Evening fell as the Danes were driven back with severe loss, and on the morrow any further attempt was given up as desperate. I remember I telegraphed the sad event to *The Times*, because I considered the result as decisive on the whole issue of the war. Again, when the enemy placed four mere field-pieces on a bare

patch of ground on the town of the Avnbjerg, in sight of the strongest Danish bastions, I asked why those few cannon were not swept from the ground; the answer was, that even against mere field-pieces rifled the huge and unwieldly 64-pounders on the Dybböl bastions had no chance. The accuracy of aim, and the great force of that modern artillery completely paralyzed the efforts of the old-fashioned Danish armament. The best officers had the least faith in that old iron ordnance; and although the Danes on their own side had a few rifled field-pieces, they durst not engage those of the Prussians, who hardly ever failed to bring forward ten or twenty guns against one.

With all this, I will not undertake to assert that a certain amount of improvidence, irresolution, and tardiness may not be laid to the charge of the Danish commanders. It was the evil fate of Denmark at this juncture to be without a General. De Meza was sacrificed to high reasons of State soon after the loss of the Dannewerk, and before he had time for the display of any talents he might chance to possess. The command of Lüttichau was merely temporary, and was exercised in times of no great emergency. As to Gerlach, the real defender of Dybböl, he rose to

the supreme rank merely by virtue of his rights of seniority. He had been fifty years in the service, and only distinguished himself in a subordinate capacity in the war of 1849. How much good there was in the man we shall never be enabled to know, as he was in indifferent health most of the time, and was altogether laid up by some untoward accident when the supreme moment drew near.

What the ascendancy of a man of real genius might have accomplished towards prolonging the defence it would be idle to speculate. But if it was prolonged beyond all that was either expedient or rational, and ended in the useless sacrifice of a vast part of the army, the fault must not by any means be imputed to the officers in command, but to the Copenhagen Government, which insisted that the position should be defended to the last extremity, and that the existence of the army, no less perhaps than the interests of the country and nation, should be immolated to a vain point of honour.

I have reason to confirm my previous statement as to the tragic events of the 18th last, that there was little or no struggle at the taking of the Dybböl bastions; that almost upon the first onset of the Prussians the Danes retreated,

and their losses were mainly caused by the tremendous fire which was poured upon them in their backward movement. I say this because the German papers are striving to magnify the victory of their troops even by exalting the heroism of their antagonists. The real fact is, that the Danes had too long been harassed, worn out, and mown down by four weeks' constant exposure to the hardships and horrors of that eternal bombardment to be able to do more than allow the enemy to take their lives at his own discretion. A few traits of personal heroism were, however, exhibited by some of the officers, and it has now been ascertained beyond all doubt that in a few instances at least the Prussians in the heat of pursuit refused to give quarter to the Danes, who were, in their own language, calling out 'Pardon!' and butchered defenceless men.

I am on board the mail boat 'Haderslev,' on the point of starting for Assens, whence I shall proceed to Copenhagen. Near me all is bustle and haste, owing to the departure of the Staff officers, who are this very morning removing their head-quarters to Fünen. News has been spread of a sudden and general advance of the Prussians into Jutland, and the Danish forces are

to be collected at Fredericia, with a view to resist the enemy's movements as far as may be found practicable. A large transport steamer, towing two heavy pontoons, is even now leaving her moorings, freighted with the pride and hope of the Danish army—those of its officers who did not meet a hero's end on the Dybböl Heights. The band is giving forth its loudest strains, and the broad Dannebrog is waving from the mast of the main vessel in honour of the General-in-Chief —waving defiance to the Prussian batteries on the Broagerland shore, which see and hear all this, and whose cannon might almost try their long range upon us with some chance of success. Should the doings of the Danes in Jutland turn out to deserve my attention I shall soon join them, wherever their fortunes may lead. For the present I am going for a few days to Copenhagen.

Poor dear Isle of Alsen! As I drove to Hörup Hav, from Klinting, I saw on every field the ploughmen preparing the ground for their spring seeds. Work and work hard, ill-fated husbandmen, and may Heaven so bless your harvest as to enable you to pay the taxes which your new German masters will soon impose. It is even so that in this latter end of the 19th

century the world is still compelled to acknowledge the law of the strongest. Whatever fault the Danish Government may have been guilty of, its improvident policy and its obstinacy must be visited upon these inoffensive people, whose sufferings are already so great and are yet only beginning!

CHAPTER VI.

DAYS OF MOURNING.

Copenhagen.—Impression made by the Fall of Dybböl.—Buoyant Spirit of the Danes.—Herr Hage.—A Military Burial.—Major V. Rosen.—An Unknown Officer.—The Conference.—Danish Misgivings about its Results.—The Abandonment of Fredericia.

April 24–30.

I ARRIVED at Copenhagen on Sunday, the 24th, and took up my old quarters at the Hôtel Royal.

If it were possible to conceive the state of mind of a bullock the moment he has been felled to the ground by the mallet of the shambles, yet unable to anticipate the butcher's knife which is so soon to put him out of trouble, then it would also be easy to form some idea of the dismay and bewilderment into which this State of Denmark has been thrown by the stunning blow of the fall of Dybböl. Like his brother beyond the North Sea, the Dane may well boast that 'he knows not when he is beaten;' but it is questionable whether in supreme contingencies this stubborn

unconsciousness of defeat is a blessing or a curse. There are not many here, so far as my range of observation extends, who realize all the difficulty and danger of their situation. Dybböl is lost, and with it nearly one half of their small army, their very best officers, a vast amount of *matériel*. Alsen is almost entirely at the mercy of the victorious enemy, Fredericia awaits a second bombardment, Jutland is overrun and plundered, but the Dane holds up his head, and his faith in himself and in the destinies of his country is unshaken.

Dybböl is fallen. Its fate was long foreseen, long deemed inevitable. 'By whose fault was it that its loss has been aggravated by the death of so many gallant men, by the capture of so many devoted battalions?' To this question there is only one answer. The catastrophe was brought about by the obstinacy and infatuation of the Government, and chiefly by the blind stubbornness of the War-office. They had nearly been stoned to death as men of little faith at the time of the abandonment of the Dannewerk. They were determined to shun all blame as to the evacuation of the Dybböl bastions. Despatch after despatch, and messenger upon messenger, acquainted them with the utter untenableness of those shattered earth-mounds. To withdraw their troops from that fatal position was, owing to the

irresolution of the enemy, a feat practicable at the eleventh hour, but the terror of a Copenhagen mob was before the eyes of the Ministers. They would allow the Prussian to *take* what they could not withhold, but they would not—durst not *yield* an inch of ground; they thought the annihilation of the army was news to be more easily broken to the people than a second retreat. No doubt the Danish nation has found rulers after its own heart.

There is mourning and darkness in many a noble mansion in this proud Copenhagen. I left my card at a friend's house on my first arrival on Sunday. I found on my table last evening the following note:—'I am sorry we cannot have the pleasure of seeing you this time. We are all in great distress at the loss of our eldest son, whom I found dead at Broager from wounds on the 18th. I arrived last night with his remains.' Poor Alfred Hage! It is only three months ago I was a guest at his house, where I met all that the country could boast of rank and wealth and genuine patriotism. He had only three sons, he said, at the time, and only wished he had more, that he might send more where those two had gone, to the battle-field in Schleswig. One of the young heirs to his vast fortune is now clay

cold under his roof; the father would hardly wish that the younger son, himself, and his house, should survive his country's downfall; and in all the blindness of his bereavement his inborn Northern courtesy does not allow him to be unmindful of the chance visitor who unwittingly intruded upon the sanctuary of his desolate home!

Multiply this instance by hundreds and thousands and the result will be—the Danish character. The voice of the people high and low, is 'No surrender!' From the Eider to the Schlei, and from the Alssund to the Little Belt, let the German take what he can; the Dane gives up nothing. Alsen may be lost in three hours; Fredericia may fall in three days. The mere relics of what was the Danish army can make a stand nowhere in Jutland. Even at sea the Austro-Prussian can gain the upper hand. But the Dane breaks, and bends not. It is not in his nature to give in.

Will Europe stand by and see the sacrifice? Can the Conference do aught for Denmark? Unmoved as she is in these last straits, Denmark would not probably have committed herself at the beginning without some confident hope of foreign aid. 'Sweden,' the Danes thought, 'was vitally interested in their preservation.' 'England had spoken out unmistakably—'They should not be alone in the struggle.'

I give utterance to no opinion of my own on the subject, mind! I merely repeat what I hear from men of the highest authority here. I am here as a reporter of events, not as a politician. Abandoned to themselves, the Danes well knew that they must succumb; they largely provided for their honour, and, for the rest, they met their fate like men. What can the Conference achieve for Denmark? What would have been its results had it met on the appointed day, the 12th? 'Can you hold Dybböl and Alsen to the 12th?' I asked the officers at head-quarters at the beginning of this month. They shook their heads and said 'We are in God's hands; we can only do our best.' And they did hold out to the 12th, and six days longer. Had the Conference met, had an armistice been agreed upon on the 15th or 16th, not only would Dybböl and Alsen have been saved, but the world would never fully have known to what extremity, to what verge of utter ruin, the ill-armed, poorly-appointed and indifferently-commanded, but heroic army of Denmark had been brought. 'Why was the Conference put off? How could England be a party to its postponement?' The 12th came and went by; so did the 20th; so the 25th. What will be done, what is being done at the present moment? Are we to have an armistice? Are the Danes to be allowed a respite before Alsen and Fredericia

meet with the fate of the Dannewerk and Dybböl?

These are the questions of the day here. It is in the nature of men who have endured heavy losses to insist that all should be sacrificed, and I meet with persons who are utterly frantic at the bare mention of an armistice and peace. Denmark, they think, can hold out indefinitely. Prolonged hostilities will only drive them from their mainland. Within their own islands—within Zealand, at least, they deem themselves unassailable. It is not they, but the Germans who will be worn out. The blockade of the Baltic ports will be fatal to the trade of Northern Germany. The jealousy between Austria and Prussia, the restless spirit of German democracy, the ambition of France, the indignation of generous England, the aspiration of Italian and Hungarian nationality, the whole chapter of accidents, cannot fail, sooner or later, to come to their aid. Like Samson in Philistine hands, the Danes think they hold the pillars on which the whole European edifice works. It is Europe's look-out, no less than their own, if they pull it about their own and everybody's ears. On the other hand, they say, what chances are there of a practicable armistice, or a plausible peace? Will a suspension of hostilities on the *uti possidetis* principle stay the plundering hands of the Prussians, and save the

Schleswigers, or even the Jutlanders, from the locusts who are eating them out of house and home? Can the Danes be bidden to abstain from such reprisals as they fancy their superiority at sea enables them to exact? Will the armistice raise the blockade of the Baltic ports, or bring about the restitution of the captured vessels? Is it just to lay such conditions on the Danes? Is it expedient for them to accept them? Would not an armistice and peace on such terms be more ruinous than the continuation of the most disastrous warfare? The Austro-Prussians could, situated as they are, hardly help living at free quarters on the invaded Cimbrian Peninsula, even if they wished. A truce would hardly be less exhausting and ruinous for Denmark than the most ruthless course of hostilities. If they must perish, at all events, is it not a thousand times preferable to fall sword in hand?

The Conference, possibly sitting at this time in London, must be busy with the solution of all these complicated problems. For my own part I am only awaiting the issue of the last few days' transactions, and am ready to travel back to Fredericia in the event of a renewal of the struggle, which is here deemed both unavoidable and imminent. Whatever its phases may be, the strife can be neither long nor cheering; and I shall not be sorry to see the end of a calamitous

contest, to which, although I at first came to it as a perfectly neutral and passive spectator, my admiration of the national character of the Danes and my love of fair play no longer allow me to be indifferent.

I attended yesterday a military funeral in the Holmens Kirke. Many of the bodies of Danish officers, which I had seen lying on their backs with outstretched arms on the dusty pavement of Ulkeböl Church, have been claimed by the relatives of the deceased, and conveyed for interment to various parts of the kingdom, several of them to the capital.

I am not, for my own part, partial to the removal of dead bodies. I do not like to see 'a corpse' put down in the way-bill among casks and bales and the other items of things stowed away in a ship's hold, nor is the sight of a coffin buried under a pile of trunks and carpet-bags in a luggage-van a seemly one. Wherever a man falls there let him lie, or as near it at least as the rites of religion require, and spare me the indignity of imprisonment in a wooden box also; wrap me in a winding-sheet, and lay me in the bosom of Mother Earth, that my remains may mingle with the elements of universal life as soon as possible. Different notions prevail in this country.

Mortals here are loth to part with the relics of mortality, and the dead heroes of Dybböl have been kept above-ground for these last nine or ten days. The burial of Major Rosen, the 'Under-Chief' of the Staff, was performed yesterday, and nothing was omitted that could give splendour and solemnity to the mournful ceremony.

I went to the Holmens Kirke at ten in the morning. There was a crowd assembled outside; the church was moderately full of decently-dressed people. There was nothing remarkable in the church, which is a plain building in the shape of a cross, except some quaint carvings, especially decorating the huge pulpit. Several scores of small tapers were burning on two or three candelabra hanging from the roof of the choir. Their farthing flame looked pale and poor in the full tide of garish daylight. A clergyman in the plain limp gown and round starched ruff of the old Lutheran garb was holding forth as I entered. The Danish language may be rich and powerful, but it is remarkable neither for rhythm nor harmony. This was the third or fourth sacred orator I had had to listen to in my short stay in this country, but I cannot say that I was favourably impressed either by the cadence of the voice or by the grace of delivery. I hardly understood a word

of what was said, of course, but have I not seen an English audience enraptured by Gavazzi's elocution, thrilled by the mere tones of his long-drawling Italian, delighting all the more in the mere sound, the less they made out of the meaning? The Dane addressed the understanding, and left the senses cold and blank; not mine only, but, as far as I could judge, those of the whole audience, who seemed only struck with the length of the oration, and were visibly relieved when it was over. A solemn peal of the organ ensued, and the sweet voices of women. Most of the singers held before them a funeral hymn that had been printed and distributed for the occasion. Musical performances in Denmark are, however, generally short and spasmodic—three or four notes, a beginning and a breaking up in the middle. The ceremony in the church was soon over, and the funeral train prepared to issue forth.

The real military do not muster strong at this present moment in Copenhagen, but there was no lack of glittering uniforms of stay-at-home soldiers, especially of broken-down veterans and dapper militiamen. Some of the wounded from Dybböl were also present, men walking on crutches, or with a bandaged head. The coffin, huge

and ponderous, after the fashion of the country, was borne by no less than ten or twelve stout men. It was completely hid under a double and treble layer of wreaths, made up of holly, fern, and other evergreens, with flowers. It was hauled up into the hearse with considerable effort, a squad of citizen guard marched in front, then followed a carriage with two common soldiers brandishing a mourning staff, then the hearse, and after it a long string of conveyances, Court and State coaches, private and public vehicles, with mourners in lace coats and plain black clothes. The convoy proceeded at a slow pace, keeping time with the solemn notes of the military band, which played by scraps and snatches, and we were roused now and then by the distant boom of the cannon, a sound familiar enough to our Söndeborg ears. We walked all across the town; across the Kongen's Nytorv, along the Store Kongens Gade, to a suburban burial place bearing the name of Garrisons Kirkegaard, a flat piece of ground, with trees and hedges yet bare of all verdure, a straggling cemetery, already too crowded with dead. The day was fine and calm, and the air, free at last from the raw blast of easterly winds, was just beginning to heave with the first breath of spring. The coffin was, not without great toil, carried across the consecrated ground; one by one the garlands were lifted from

its lid and laid reverently on the brink of the deep grave. Presently the coffin was let down in its resting-place; on it were lowered the warrior's good sword, and a velvet cushion, on which were pinned three crosses with which the stout breast used to be decorated. A very tall clergyman, more than ninety years old, then stepped on the scaffold beside the grave, and, muttering the awful words, 'Dust unto dust,' &c., threw a small shovelful of loose earth on the rattling coffin. All was now over, and the mourning company broke slowly and silently asunder. It was a truly brave man who was laid there in the ground, an able man, a worthy man. Though not very high in rank at the opening of the campaign, Captain Rosen was, perhaps, the most efficient officer in the Staff, the very life and soul of the army, a wakeful man, indefatigable. He was hardly above the middle height, he had a spare and somewhat gaunt frame, flaxen hair, almost white, a pale and even sallow complexion, yet he was strong and wiry, and equal to the most strenuous exertions. He was at work all day at head-quarters, out almost every night at the front. He was between thirty and forty years old, quite in the prime and pride of manhood. He had the cold, light-grey eyes common among these Northern people, a very thin hatchet face, very prominent features, yet the face was by no means

plain; it had an expression of goodness and intelligence, above all things of bold and ready decision. Not many men in the world could boast of a greater strength of character than was to be seen at a glance in the countenance of this valiant Holsteiner. His mind was always made up, on any point, at a moment's notice, on any emergency. Any question put to him was always answered curtly and sharply, unmistakably. There was no deficiency in courtesy, and his face easily brightened up with a benevolent smile; but he was somewhat brusque and abrupt, and his voice had all the ring of undisputed command. There was something peculiar in the shake of the head meant to convey a negative, the half sly, half grim smile, the wish to be understood with the least possible waste of words. We used to submit our telegrams to him, as he had been charged with the censorship of the camp intelligence; he ran over them with one glance, and drew his pen across one or two lines occasionally, looking us steadily in the face all the while, and conveying with that one glance all his reasons for the suppression of what might be indiscreet and compromising in our despatches. We were always satisfied that all was done for the best, and asked no questions.

Light rest the earth on Major Rosen! I did not see the owner of Rönhave at the burial, but two other brothers of the deceased—there must be at least half a score of them—walked behind the coffin. The chief mourner, however, was the Major's eldest son, a child six years old, the eldest of five, who went hand-in-hand with one of his uncles, and stood foremost on the brink of his father's grave. To him, according to the old Northern notion, belongs the blood-feud against his father's slayers. All the other children, mere infants, were left at home with the young widowed mother. That boy is a perfect miniature of his father—the same flaxen hair, the same sharp cut of the face, the same straight, prominent nose, the same sallowness of complexion, remarkable at his time of life.

I am not generally apt to fall into the melting mood, but that boy upset me more than I might at the time have been willing to avow. There was a dizziness in my brain; memory and fancy played their pranks unchecked, and conjured up distant scenes, other graves, other mourners; the curtain was rudely drawn from the past, and I lived some of the most trying moments of my life all over again within the compass of that one minute.

Honour to the memory of the brave! Rosen gave his life for his country, and did not bring with him the consciousness of the probable use-

lessness of the sacrifice. Nor will his life have been thrown away, even if no good were to come of it to the cause of Denmark. It is the whole story of Hector and Andromache, and Astyanax over again. Troy may not be saved; but a fair name survives to soothe the grief of the bereaved, and to leave a luminous example to work far and wide towards the ennobling of the human race.

There was another funeral to-day, 27th, at twelve o'clock, at St. Anna's Kirke, but it was on a much larger—indeed on too large a scale. The day was glorious beyond all description, and it shed on all moving objects a gorgeousness greatly interfering with the soberness becoming so sad an occasion. No less than eleven coffins were carried to their last bourne. They contained the bodies of Colonel Lasson, Colonel Bernstorff, Lieutenant-Colonel Scholten, and others. The whole town had turned out to see the pageantry. The streets were hung with flags, the dazzling bright white and red colours of which could hardly be subdued by the light strips of crape at the top of the staves. The coffins came out of church one by one, all decked with their fresh garlands, preceded by a battalion of recruits on foot, and a squadron of glittering Cuirassiers of the Guard. At the head of the mourning proces-

sion were the King and the Landgrave, father of the Queen; then came all the Court, army, and navy dignitaries, Bishop Monrad, the Prime Minister, *in pontificalibus*, and a whole host of magistrates, civil and military officials, and other town and State notabilities. The convoy wound up the broad handsome street called Norgens Gade on its way to the cemetery, an endless walking funeral. The crowd was well dressed and better behaved. Still one looked in vain for a sorrow-stricken countenance, except here and there among the relatives of the deceased. The fact is, even death is a mere show and a pastime if exhibited before too vast a multitude. The Copenhagen people have had their gala day, and the enjoyment of the hour drove from their minds all thoughts either of the disaster that occasioned it or of any other evils that may have to follow.

I did not follow the convoy to the cemetery, having already had more than my full share of such sorrowful scenes. But the ceremony of the interment was, as I have been assured by eye-witnesses, inexpressibly touching. It was the whole nation that acted as chief-mourner before the grave that yawned for so many of her most gallant sons; and when the King, whose heart, by the consent of all who know him, is in the right place, stepped out of the circle of the

brilliant staff which surrounded him, and seizing hold of both the hands of the widow of one of the private soldiers, who was this day laid in the ground by the side of his late superiors, endeavoured to address words of consolation to the poor woman, and his words were broken by sobs—the emotion was irresistible, and there was not one eye dry in the whole of that vast assemblage.

A curious and affecting episode I have yet to record connected with the sad catastrophe of Dybböl. Among the dead bodies which I saw stretched out on the floor of Ulkeböl Church during the last days of my sojourn in Alsen was that of one, on the breast of whose coat was pinned a label, with the words, '*En unkjœndt officeer.*' It was the corpse of a short, thick-set man about forty years of age, with short thick hair, full dark beard, with strong and somewhat harsh features, composed to the sleeplike calmness of death, with his arms stretched along his sides, and the fists tightly closed. That corpse had been for a day in the hands of the Prussians, lost in the crowd of the dead and wounded; it had been rowed across, and had lain for two days in Ulkeböl Church, and it still went by the name of the 'unknown officer.' It was then conveyed

to Augustenburg in an open coffin; it has been left exposed in the vestry of the church there, as if in a kind of Morgue, and has been seen by nearly all the military and civilians who are still tarrying on the spot, and the photograph of the body and of its coffin is now published in the *Illustreret Tidende*, in the faint hope that the perfect likeness may lead to its eventual identification. There ought now to be little chance of it. The man was probably a Swede or Bornholmer, one of the several officers who used to drop in upon us as volunteers at the various stages of the campaign. He may have arrived either direct from home, or from Fredericia, on the very eve of the last attack upon Dybböl; he may have ventured out across the bridges on his first arrival, without either reporting himself at head-quarters or attaching himself to any corps, and had thus none of his superiors or subalterns, no comrade or friend to recognize him. His rank itself could not be ascertained, as the shoulder straps, the only distinction in a Danish uniform, had been torn from his coat; but the fine cloth allowed no doubt as to his being an officer. His mortal wound was in the chest, and, for the rest, there was not the least disfigurement in the face or person to stand in the way of immediate recognition by any one, not only familiar with him, but who had only occasionally met him. As peculiar

marks which might establish his identity, it was observed that he had a deep scar on the right brow, and wore a tight India-rubber stocking round the right leg. Hard was the fate of the unknown dead. The most touching obsequies, the most signal honours, have been paid both in Copenhagen and all over the kingdom to the remains of officers and privates fallen in this patriotic war. The body of each man has been faithfully consigned to the pious cares of those who had a right to claim it. Hardly one was lowered in the grave without the tears of some one akin to it by blood or love. Only the poor 'unknown' lies still above ground unclaimed, unhonoured, unwept; and, perhaps, far away in some distant home in Dalecarlia, in Gothland, far away on the shores of some Swedish islet, or Norwegian fiord, some desolate home is plunged into all the pangs of expectation and uncertainty, and may have long to wait before it is reached by the undoubted tidings of its irreparable bereavement.

The faith of the Danes in the possible results of a Conference was at no time very great, and that explains the reluctance with which the proposal of such a meeting was at first entertained at Copenhagen. 'Diplomatic mediation,' they think, 'may answer its purpose when war is going on

between two states of nearly-balanced power, and when peace is urged upon them by equally strong or even stronger nations, interested in the preservation of public order and security, and sure, by the slightest effort, to turn the scales against that one of the belligerents who may show himself less amenable to reason. But when the quarrel arises between a giant and a pigmy—when the strife is between an unarmed traveller lying prostrate on the ground and two burly highwaymen pouring the contents of their ruffianly blunderbusses into his writhing body, the case is not one for the meek, Quaker-like remonstrance of the peacemaker, but for the active interference of the policeman's bludgeon. Prussia and Austria had from the beginning the little monarchy of Denmark at their mercy. Their aggression on a defenceless neighbour might or might not involve them in difficulties with the Western Powers. But they took their chance of that; they knew they could always rely on the apathy and irresolution of England; they flattered themselves they had it always in their power to propitiate the ambition of France,—at all events they reckoned upon the traditional antipathies, on the mutual jealousies and suspicions of those two countries. They were aware, at any rate, of the proneness of all Europe to acquiesce in *faits accomplis*.

'They were not far out in their calculations;

they brought against Denmark a force sufficient to crush her in three days; in three months they had her at their mercy. Then began that diplomatic negotiation which secured the consent of all parties concerned to a Conference before the 1st of April, which put off the meeting of that Conference till the 25th, and which, so far as we know here, has not been able to bring about an armistice on the 29th. And, in the meanwhile, we have the by-play of the Emperor Napoleon congratulating Prussia on her victory at Dybböl, and throwing out his hints as to an appeal to universal suffrage.'

With these bitter reflections and gloomy forebodings do the Danes look forward to the results of the London Conference.

None of us can forget the time when another small State—Piedmont—worsted in her Lombard campaign against Austria, at Custoza, placed herself in the hands of those same Western Powers, and expected from French and English mediation a solution of the Italian question, which might enable her at least to fall on her feet and find some remedy for the evils of an oppressed nationality. Well, the endeavours of the well-meaning mediators seemed all tending to afford Austria what she wanted—time. Time gave Austria the means of reorganizing her shattered strength; it wore out the resources, the patience, the faith of

distracted Sardinia. Ten months' Anglo-French diplomacy only ripened the disaster of Novara. So far as the Western Powers were concerned, not only were Piedmont and Italy sacrificed, but, thanks to them, the death, which was at all events inevitable, was aggravated by ten months' agony.

We have here a parallel case. Five or six months ago Germany picked a quarrel with Denmark. Had the latter been really conscious of her isolated position, she would at once have ascertained the extent of her aggressors' demands, and compounded with them as she best could, taking her counsel from necessity. But Sweden and Norway gave positive promise of aid; and, in the case of a neighbour whose house is only separated from a burning building by a partition wall, co-operation was to be reasonably expected. England was loud in her expression of sympathy. Denmark fought and succumbed, and she is as alone in the council as she has been all along in the field. That being the case, why should Denmark prolong negotiation any more than persevere in the contest? The traveller is on the ground; the muzzles of the highwaymen's blunderbusses press on either side on his temples. Would it not be a thousand times the wisest course to hold out his purse and let the spoilers help themselves? That is the conclusion most

people about me have come to. 'What do these Germans wish?' they say. 'What is the extent of their demands? Do they want Holstein and half Schleswig? Or will nothing but the whole of the Duchies and Jutland into the bargain satisfy them? Let them keep what they have; let them take what we have no power to withhold from them!' All the unarmed intercession of the Western Powers, the Danes are convinced, will not at this moment be of any avail towards preserving the integrity of their monarchy. Were it even possible to retain the Duchies on any arrangement of personal union, the very existence of Denmark as a State and a nation would, they think, be more irreparably compromised than by any amount of territorial loss. So long as one German subject remains, placed on exceptional conditions, Germanism, they fancy, will eat into the very vitals of Danish nationality. Holstein and German Schleswig must be held at discretion, or are better parted with. If the line of the Schlei and the Dannewerke can satisfy German cupidity, the Danes will be rather gainers than losers by the riddance. Unfortunately the line of demarcation between the two nationalities cannot be fixed at the Dannewerke and the Schlei; it is not to be drawn on any natural or artificial boundary. Should the test of race, language, and choice be referred to, it would be necessary to

consult the vote of every town, village, and hamlet; it would have to be done upon the removal of all armed force, Danish or German; it should take place under the supervision of a fair-dealing French and English authority, and the result would be such a jagged frontier, such a dovetailing of one people into the other, as would render the limitation of the two States for all practical purposes a mere impossibility.

But even when Denmark is brought to this pass—when necessity wrings from her so ruinous a concession—will she have peace granted to her? Will Germany be satisfied with her prey—with the fine harbours of Kiel and Eckernförde—with the extension of her trade and maritime power in the Baltic? The landmarks of old Europe are removed, and the victorious Prussians are sweeping on far and wide over Jutland. Three hours can give them possession of Alsen—three days of Fredericia. Their irresistible artillery can force a way over the Little Belt into Fünen. A trifling reverse can do away with such superiority as Denmark may still boast at sea. Why should not the Teuton push on his conquests upon Zealand? Why should he not have the Sound in his keeping? The Danish branch of his old Scandinavian enemy lies at his discretion, and Europe is in no mood to set any limit to successful aggression. Robbed of the southern districts of the Cimbrian

Peninsula, it little matters whether Denmark preserves the name of an independent State—virtually she becomes a mere vassal of Germany; in her reduced fortunes she must be fain to obey the behests of the very Powers with which she engaged in too unequal contest.

'Let Germany have Kiel and Eckernförde, possibly also Flensburg and Apenrade and Hörup Hav, and you will see what bearing that will have, not only on the destinies of Denmark and Sweden, but also on the maritime and military relations of all Europe. Remove all restraint from the ambition of the stronger States; let it be understood that the weaker can be despoiled with impunity; allow Prussia to take the lead in Germany; force Austria to seek her indemnity on the Po or the Danube; reveal to the world your fears of a little war;—you will see what prospects of a universal war open before you!' Such is the cry of wail and warning that rises at the present day in the streets of Copenhagen. Denmark looks upon herself as lost. It is for Europe to consider how much of the general peace and security may be involved in her ruin.

We received yesterday, the 29th, at this place the intelligence of the evacuation of Fredericia. The fall of that fortress comes closely after the

capture of the Dybböl bastions; it may be no less speedily followed by the abandonment of Alsen.

I should not at this moment be in Copenhagen had there been the faintest hope of a different issue of the contest. From the moment I saw with my own eyes what I could not have believed on other people's report—when I saw, on the morning of the 19th, masses of Prussian infantry coming out of the Dybböl bastions taken by them the day before, and marching down the hill in serried ranks to the *tête de pont*, and to the very margin of the Sound,—when I saw, on the other sides, the Danes standing idly to their guns at the Church Battery without firing a shot, when hardly a shot could be fired without striking almost *à bout portant* into the enemy's columns,—from that moment, I say, I felt that there must be some reason for the overweening rashness of the Prussians, and for the inaction and forbearance of the Danes. At first I thought a temporary suspension of hostilities had been privily agreed upon, but day after day passed and we remained in the island in a state neither of war nor truce. The two hostile armies stood looking at each other across the water; a cannon shot at very rare intervals was exchanged; a *parlementaire* from time to time rowed across on either side to settle matters about the dead and wounded, but

the Prussians evidently were in no hurry to force their way across the Strait, and the Danes were in no mood to attempt to dispute the enemy's passage.

Day after day, as I rode about the island, I was struck with the rapid disappearance of the relics of the Danish army. The loss of Dybböl occurred on the Monday. On Tuesday night three regiments were secretly embarked. On the following day the battalion of the Guards, the only corps that was yet intact, was smuggled away. The head-quarters had been removed from Ulkeböl to Hörup Hav, as if their business was not to lead the troops into the field, but to see them safely out of it. Only one division, we were told, was left for the defence of Als; the main part of the army was hastening to Jutland. That division, however, as far as I could ascertain, did not exceed 2,000 or 3,000 men, and its artillery consisted of about twelve field-pieces. On Saturday morning the Staff embarked for Fünen, and I preceded it. I understood that head-quarters were to be established at Assens, not at Fredericia, nor even at Middlefarht, and then I concluded there would be no more fighting, either in Als or Jutland, and travelled to Copenhagen with the conviction that the war was at an end.

I was not mistaken; during these last few days,

we are now informed, the troops and the *matériel* had been gradually withdrawn from Fredericia. A trifling skirmish occurred the day before yesterday at outposts, on the left, on the banks of the Overswomelsö. The Danes withdrew behind that broad ditch in the evening, and during the night they quitted the fortress and came across into Fünen. The few remaining defenders of Alsen will also give their enemies the slip, at no distant period, if they have a chance. The cavalry division under Linderkrone, which is now far away in North Jutland, will embark on the first opportunity, and the whole Cimbrian peninsula will lie at the discretion of the Austro-Prussians.

The Danes have shown in these backward movements the same adroitness that characterized their retreat from the Dannewerk. It is a pity they were not allowed to exercise the same ingenuity in falling back from their position at Dybböl, when it had become untenable. They have in the meanwhile greatly facilitated, if not altogether anticipated, the work of the London Conference. There is now a virtual armistice between the Danes and the Germans, unless the latter take it into their heads to cross over into Fünen, an attempt which would seem incredible, and in which they might possibly meet with greater difficulties than they are likely to foresee.

Evidently Fünen has now become the *place d'armes* of the Danish army. With the exception of the narrow strait dividing that island from Jutland, between Fredericia and Snoghöi on one side and Strip Middlefart or Kongebro on the other, and with the exception of the inlets about Fanoe Island, where the water is on some points hardly more than half-a-mile across,—the Little Belt is a good auxiliary to a State which has not yet lost its maritime superiority, and even on the banks of the narrower channel the Danes, by a concentration of their forces, will be able to show a bold front. Experience has taught them, however, that their old-fashioned artillery is no better than a mere row of popguns when brought into collision with the rifled cannon of the Prussians. It is only this new-fangled engine of war that wore out the constancy of the Danes at Dybböl and advised the abandonment of Fredericia, as it will, no doubt, determine the evacuation of Als. The Danes have been true to their programme throughout. They have come to no terms with their enemies; they have given up nothing; they have merely suffered them to take what they could not withhold. They have always made at least a show of defence; they have put the Prussians to the trouble of the beginning of an attack. The traveller beset by the highwaymen has not tendered his purse.

He has even buttoned up his coat, and laid his hand on his pocket. It may be an idle, unavailing protest; but the world must take it into account, and give it such credit as it deserves.

CHAPTER VII.

COPENHAGEN.

Copenhagen.—Thorwaldsen.—Elsinore.—The Sound.—Hamlet.—Denmark and Sweden.—Whit Sunday.—Copenhagen at Dyr-have.—Roeskilde.—Life in Death.—Decline in Youth.—The Movement of the Population in Denmark.—The Copenhagen Mob.—Parties in Denmark.

May 1–15.

I SUPPOSE I am too old to find pleasure in any town: too old, at any rate, to become accustomed to a new town. But, even to an untravelled stranger, open to new impressions, I should think Copenhagen ought to appear an insufferably dull place. What it may be like in the summer months I cannot say, for its Langelinie, its Rosenborg gardens, its bastions and quays, may afford a pleasant alternative of sunny and shady promenades. But now, with snow on the ground at May Day, and ice in the ponds on the anniversary of the first Napoleon's death, open-air enjoyments are too much out of the question, and one is fain to entrench himself behind mountains of brick and mortar, anywhere

out of the blast of this cruel, withering east wind. As a winter abode, Copenhagen is to me a bleak, howling wilderness. On the first gleam of fair weather, I am told, all who can afford it forsake it. The poor town is out of season at all times.

Like Stuttgardt, or Hanover, or Darmstadt, or Karlsruhe, Copenhagen is a *residenz*, not a capital; the dwelling of a court, not the head of a nation. England goes to London at least for six weeks—France is in Paris all the year round; but the Danish people are, in the main, rural and agricultural. The homes of the noble and wealthy are in their castles and farmyards. There are only a few courtiers here on duty. The King lives in his old private quarters, *en bourgeois*. The huge barrack-like palace of Christianborg, lying there across a foul ditch opposite my hotel windows, is shut up and deserted; the very sentry-boxes are untenanted.

Like Turin or Washington, or the Hague, Copenhagen is a town made to order. The clumsy botcher who planned it cut the cloth much too broad for the body it was to clothe: the consequence is, a loose misfit. There are acres of pavement, of hard, flinty pavement, dwarfing, by their vastness, the plain buildings that encompass them; market-places, with but few buyers and sellers; numberless inlets and

canals, with rather scanty shipping. It is what the Americans would call 'a one-horse capital.'

It is all bran-new, also; unhistorical, void of interest. You look in vain for anything old or even odd, if you except a house with two gables over a linendraper's shop in the Östergade. Your eye can only rest with pleasure on the attics and twisted spire of the Exchange, or the turrets of the Rosenborg, quaint, at least, if not elegant, buildings of the seventeenth century, all, apparently, of the same date, and planned by the same hand. For the rest, the town looks as if just finished: it is clean, respectable, wofully empty, too, with the exception of the little maze of streets clustering about the Öster and Kiobmager Gade, where the crowd elbow and hustle each other on the narrow, slippery side-walks.

Although it has existed, as a capital, for centuries, Copenhagen is only a town of yesterday; it has neither the life nor the monuments of the nation. The houses of the great are not many, nor are their equipages frequently met about the streets, nor can the eye, weary with all that dull sameness, seek relief at least in the humble abode of the poor, for a provident sovereign stowed away the labouring classes, chiefly sailors, in some out-of-the-way ward at the Ny-Östergade, a labyrinth of narrow streets, built after the fashion of a bee-hive, with a cell for each family, and the

look of comfort, cleanliness, and well-being everywhere. There is but little if any beggary in Copenhagen, as there is none whatever anywhere else in Denmark; no beggary, no drunkenness, no riot, no apparent vice. Public and private charity, universally-spread education, have banished all human ills out of sight. These Northern people are a mere flock, the happiest mixture of strength and gentleness of the lion and the lamb I ever fell in with. An English clergyman of my acquaintance was finding fault, the other day, with what he called their 'lukewarmness in divine matters;' but the same reverend gentleman confessed in the same breath, that the Danes, even in this city, are the 'truest and most honest people in the world.' But, if it is the purpose of all religion, as of all law, to 'bind,' why should the bonds on a man be tighter than his nature requires? Some gentlemen from Scotland Yard came hither to organize a police after the most approved Metropolitan model; but the men enlisted for that service are, I am told, most of them sending in their resignation, ashamed of, and disgusted with, an office which, in a community like this, turned out too tedious a sinecure. Nor can crime ever be imported from abroad. Some of the nimble-fingered members of the London or Paris fraternity of the swell mob, were repeatedly tempted to try their

fortunes here, allured by the glittering bundles that silversmiths and jewellers lay out almost within every man's reach; but, somehow, their lungs could not breathe in this uncongenial atmosphere. They voted the place 'slow,' and removed themselves and their industry to more favourable latitudes.

All this is pleasing, no doubt, very consoling, only, in the long run, hardly amusing.

Like Dresden or Munich, Copenhagen takes rank as an artistic capital. One man, great and good, has left upon it the mark of his genius: a man who could have created Scandinavian sculpture, but has only petrified that of Greece and Italy. If you wish to live at peace with the Danes, mind you show all respect to the memory of Thorwaldsen! For myself, I love him with all my might, for his heart was as great as his brain, but his classicism, seen as it is in his beloved city, where it is treasured up by the ton weight, is too much for me. Oh! those everlasting Hebes and Venuses, those never-ending folds of flowing stone-drapery of un-crinolined trailing garments! those Cupids, those Graces, all that reproduction of the wonders of the Vatican Halls! Thorwaldsen had a correct eye, a lofty mind; there were immense powers of labour in

him. His Night and Morning are unrivalled, his Graces exquisite, his Lions grand and great. Happy if he had never known Rome or Canova! As it was, he contented himself with emulating other people's models; he did not give us his own. Like the Italian sensualists with whom he communed, he thought a great deal of forms. He carved limbs and features; he hardly sculptured the soul. There is scarcely one face out of the thousand that stare at you from the plaster wilderness of the Thorwaldsen Museum, on which my eye has dwelt with any interest, save only the bust of the great man himself, done by his own hand. What expression of strength and softness in that demi-godly countenance! And what a beautifully pure and genuine Scandinavian type! What a pity the man should fall so desperately in love with the straight noses and narrow foreheads of Grecian beauty, instead of seeking his ideal amongst the fine flesh and blood of his own Copenhagen maidens!

I went to the Fru Kirke, the church of which the great artist is the patron saint; a chaste, severe Grecian building, shivering, as it were, like a naked Eve in this bleak Northern sky, with a huge square tower crushing a consumptive portico, a brown edifice, I hardly know whether of stone or stucco, gloomy and prison-like outside. Inside are the great works of the master—

the huge apostles, the Christ, the angel. I cannot fall prostrate even before that central face and worship. I see neither God nor angel there, only cold, soulless marble; and, even setting aside all recollections of Belvedere or the San Lorenzo's sacristy, I say, I would give all the wonders of this Church, ay, and even of that of Possagno to boot, for the intense expression of thought caught in stone by the sculptor of the 'Reading Girl' at the London Exhibition.

But I am a mere Goth in matters of art, and I hardly know what possessed me to venture on such slippery ground. Copenhagen is scientific no less than artistic; it has museums as improving as schools, though somewhat dreary as lounging-places, where learned and amiable professors do duty as cicerones, and go through the routine of their show, and accommodate themselves to the capacity of high and low with a patience and unwearied good-nature, of which Danes alone would be capable.

Copenhagen has theatres, too, with heavy dramas and propriety ballets; it has Alhambras, Walhallas, and other cafés chantants, dull, and decent, and orderly; and, come Whitsuntide, we are to have Tivoli open,—a sort of Cremorne, with concerts, fireworks, and balloons, when, 'if any one can feel dull at Copenhagen,' as I am rather naïvely assured, 'he must have all the

devils, red and black, as well as blue, lying heavy on his conscience.'

Unable to endure the capital at the end of the week, I took steamer, on Tuesday afternoon, for Helsingöre (Elsinore). In spite of the fierce, nipping east wind, I enjoyed two hours on the Sound. The spot has great interest, even after you have seen the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, Messina and Gibraltar. I felt more at home in dead Elsinore than in living Copenhagen. Were I King of Denmark, I would have no other home than Hamlet's Castle—the Kronborg. I visited it yesterday morning at earliest hour, when I had the place all to myself. The site is unequalled in the North: the building itself attractive. It belongs to the Gothic style of the latter part of the sixteenth century, and has much in common with the Exchange, Rosenborg, Fredericksborg, and a few other palaces of a somewhat later epoch, which were probably an eyesore to Thorwaldsen, but which still delight men of more eclectic taste. Were it a ruin, and had it a green, bold hill for a background, it might vie in picturesqueness with the turrets and halls of dismantled Heidelberg. As it is, it stands out white and glittering on its bold headland (its 'öre' or 'ear'), a conspicuous object, visible for

miles and miles, by land and sea, the great land-mark in the Sound; a solid and not inelegant edifice of white stone, with leaden spires and pinnacles, within a labyrinth of bastions and batteries, of moats and casemates, which have ceased to be formidable in war, and might be turned into flower-beds, groves, grottoes, and fish-ponds, and become a perfect paradise in time of peace. The Castle is out of town, adjoining the town, lording it over land and sea, the sovereign of the Strait, the very nest for a sea-king. Elsinore is dying, dead; the little town could not survive the abolition of the Sound dues, on which it throve for so long a time. It has two or three heavy old churches, towering and lumbering, giving a certain air of grandeur and stateliness to the decaying place; its fish-market is still renowned, and the hotel is respectable; it boasts a few consular establishments, with lofty flag-staffs. The American Consul, a Yankeefied Dane, took me out on a long walk to the fine grounds of Marien-lyst. The British Consul-General gave me a charming drive across country to Odinshöi, and showed me courteous hospitality at his marine villa, a rural spot just outside the town—all flowers and shrubberies—chosen with genuine English taste. A lovelier family than Mr. Bridges Taylor boasts, a more winning smile and darling dimples than those

of little Jessie, six years old; or tenderer eyes and a deeper fringe of eyelashes than those of little Nora, or Elsinora, two years older; a more earnest face than Leila's, or a brighter than Mary's, are not to be seen in all Denmark. In 'Hamlet,' however, after all, lies the spell that will for ever attach itself to dear, declining Elsinore. It was by the steamer 'Hamlet' that I went up the Sound the other day; it is by the 'Horatio' I purpose to go down this morning; I may come back to-morrow by the 'Ophelia.' They took me to a spot in the woods, an elevated spot, where, embosomed in a grove of beech-trees, two hundred years old, there stands a mound of earth surmounted by a dwarfish pillar, which, I was told, marks the spot of Hamlet's grave. There may be doubts as to the last abode of the 'Prince of Denmark,' there can be none as to his abode in the Kronborg. Had I been there by moonlight, instead of in the glare of a clear frosty May morning, I should have been as sure of falling in with the 'old Mole,' burrowing the ground of the bastion, as was the worthy Dane, who hewed at the apparition with his partisan, and clove it in twain, making no more impression on its ghostly substance than he would have done upon vapour or gas.

People may well be sceptical about Hamlet altogether. They may well gravely assure us

that 'his country was not Zealand but Jutland.' If Shakespeare was able to spin the fable out of his brain, then he surely might as easily have created the stage, the castle, and the town, and the whole surrounding scenery, both land and sea. It is the poet's own world we live in here, and we consult no antiquarian. You may as well disbelieve the evidence of your own senses as question the truth of the action which has taken so strong a hold of your imagination, or dissociate Elsinore from the 'fiction' which has made it a reality. Dunham's 'History of Denmark' may be a mere tissue of myths, but the 'Prince of Denmark' is your true history. I lived the great drama over again, and was, for a whole hour, in the seventh heaven.

Presently, however, I fell from my dreamy attitude, and a new and living interest spread over the scene.

There is always something earnest, and almost holy, about a nation's boundaries, especially if the line be one of God's own drawing; not an arbitrary limit, traced by the hand of man, but a national frontier, which may be politically trespassed upon, but which cannot be materially effaced. You experience the feeling as you stand on an Alpine summit before a milestone

bearing the name 'France' on the western side, and that of 'Italy' on the eastern. You are impressed with it as you walk on the bridge at Bâle, with the arrowy stream of the Rhine rushing beneath your feet—a barrier between the Gaul and the Teuton to the end of time. Here, on either side of the Sound, two human families, or rather two branches, twin branches of a human family, stand looking at each other, across this mere ditch of sea water, at barely two or three miles' distance—as they have stood looking at each other for centuries. Seen only a mile or two inland, the towers and spires of Helsingöre so blend themselves with the houses and churches of Helsingford on the other side, that the optical illusion is complete, and you fancy your eyes are resting upon one and the same town. Yet the two coasts are and have been eternally divided, and the people on them have been almost invariably estranged from one another ever since their earliest settlement in these Northern regions. This land which I tread is Denmark; yonder, across the water, all along the Sound on my right, and throughout that vast expanse of the Cattegat on my left, lies Sweden. Danes and Swedes were originally one people; Scandinavia seemed intended for one State; the harsh language that grates on my ears on this side is by no means unlike the dia-

lect which, no less harshly would jar upon them, were I to land on the opposite shore. But, with the exception of a few rare instances in which union between the countries was established by main force, the two kindred races have never coalesced; the two brothers have at all times been the worst of neighbours. The time was when they seemed to live only to inflict all possible harm upon each other; and the day has come, now, when one looks with sterile sympathy, at least, if not with perfect indifference, on the downfall of the other. Sweden has been but a lukewarm, useless friend to Denmark in her hour of need. She was lavish of her good wishes; she held meetings, she voted money, but she lent no efficient aid whatever. The Swedish and Norwegian volunteers in the Danish army at this present moment may almost be numbered on one's fingers' ends. Both at this juncture and in 1849 the performance of Sweden fell miserably short of her magnificent promises. Yet, in the fate of Denmark, that of Sweden is undoubtedly, however remotely, involved. The waning Scandinavian race is placed between two millstones, which have been for centuries grinding it to dust. Denmark is hardly more seriously threatened by German rapacity than Sweden is exposed to the cupidity of Russia. Teutonic and Sclavonic ambition will, in all probability, never rest till they

come face to face on either bank of this very Sound. Like the Polish, the Italian, and so many other races, these brave Northerners are threatened with subjection, if not with destruction, less by the strength of their neighbours than by divisions among themselves. We hear, indeed, in Copenhagen, as in Stockholm and Christiania, of a longing for unity—of national aspirations; but such yearnings are restricted to a small party; they are the dream of a few intelligent, generous, but impracticable enthusiasts. The unusual antipathies between the lower classes are too deeply rooted, the present and momentous interests of the leading men of the two countries diverge too widely. Like most other statesmen, the men at the head of the Swedish Government live by the day,—they take no heed of the morrow; they labour under no apprehension of evils as yet looming in the distance. It has been said that King Charles takes the Danish cause strongly to heart; that Norway especially is ready to rise *en masse* in support of what was only half-a-century ago her sister kingdom; but Sweden, as a State, gives no signs, and she even throws out hints that she cannot and will not stir without sufficient encouragement of mightier Powers. While she waits and deliberates Denmark is lost, nevertheless; and Sweden ought not to forget that Denmark cannot

say to France or England what she plainly intimates to her Scandinavian sister, '*Mors mea, mors tua!*'

Whit Sunday is a merry day in Denmark; a Danish Derby-day; a Derby-day without the races, without betting, without chaff, without swearing, without drunkenness. As all London on a certain day in May pours out to the Epsom Downs, so does the whole multitude of Copenhagen, on the fiftieth day after Easter, walk, drive, or ride out to the Deer Park. The alleged attraction in England is the beauty, the spirit, the power of horseflesh. In Denmark the avowed object is to see the new green of the country, to strip the beech-trees of their first tender boughs, to bring back the glad tidings of the incipient summer. The real business in both countries is to have an 'outing' in the open, to eat, drink, and be merry.

I know not whether it often happens so, but this year these poor Danes have been cheated of their spring altogether. The ice broke up and the snow vanished slowly just as the Prussians drove us from cover by their bombardment of Sönderborg. That was on the 2nd of April, and ever since we have had almost incessant dry weather, bright skies, blue seas, dusty roads,

parched fields, and killing east winds. You know how wearisome that everlasting cloudless sky is in Italy, that blazing sun, that unbroken, unlimited horizon, that perpetual succession of day after day, without change even for the worse. But down in the South the air is at least balmy, the earth green and fragant; life is enjoyment even in its monotony. Here the sameness is of suffering. The cruel, nipping north-easter fastens upon the young earth at its re-awakening; it sweeps the land and the air of all moisture, it blights and stiffens vegetation, it makes of the whole landscape a sad mockery of life in death. Up rises the sun in the clear, bronzed sky; up he rises at unconscionably early hours (it was daylight this morning at half-past two): round he goes, glaring and glowing at us from every point in the firmament; he scorches yet warms not, for his rays seem to glide from the wind-chilled atmosphere as arrows from an adamantine shield. Day after day, and week after week, we have been thus tantalized with the show of spring and the stern reality of winter. From early April to this day there has been no other change than just a few thin, fleeting clouds, and the faintest sprinkling of snow by way of a treat on May Day. But there is an inexhaustible fund of patience and resignation in the soil as there is in the people of Denmark, so that, after waiting for

its refreshing spring showers from the Equinox almost to the Solstice, the earth has come to the wise resolution to do without them, and has put forth, or is slowly and timidly putting forth, its green, allowing it to shrink and shrivel in the blast as it may please Heaven.

It is to hail and bless and to revel in that green that the good people of Copenhagen, thankful for small mercies, went out yesterday to their beloved Deer Park. The bells were ringing noisily from all their steeples in the morning, and soon after noon the day was made auspicious by the deep booming of the cannon announcing the safe arrival in the harbour of the Niels-Juel and the other frigates victorious on the waters of Heligoland. The Dannebrogs were up on every roof, of blood-red and of purest white, and out poured the happy crowd, well-dressed, good and good-looking, a crowd blessed for so many years with ease and prosperity, and loth as yet to believe in the coming day of humiliation and defeat.

What country on the face of the earth exhibits so universal an aspect of well-being as this long-enduring Denmark? In what region of the world does the human race contrive to flourish better than under the frown of this apparently God-forgotten northern climate? Where do you find here, in town or country, a single horse looking lean and lank, starved as an Italian poster, or

jaded and fagged like a London cab-drudge? The Dane has something more than the German charity and consideration for his cattle; he feels actual love and tenderness for the whole brute creation; the sparrow in his straw loft, the stork on his roof, are objects of almost religious worship. He talks to his horse by the hour, hugs his dog with perfect transport; the linnet on his window-sill, above his never-failing flower-pot, is his pride and delight.

Out they all went yesterday, man and beast, long rows of *chars-à-banc*, laden with a score or two of people each, men and women, with half-a-dozen children to every grown-up person. Out of town went all the town, from the Nörregade, from the Store Kongens Gade, all round and across the citadel, along the Langelinie, on the great high road coasting the Sound. It is five or six English miles to the Deer Park, the road flanked on either side with countryhouses, garden-houses, marine villas, with the blue sea always in sight; the blue sea all swarming with glittering white sails, with the dark low line of the Swedish coast bounding the view. A crowd of *chars-à-banc* or open omnibuses, a crowd of flys, a crowd of more elegant private equipages, a crowd of conveyances of every description moving

along without hurry, without jostling, without an oath, with hardly a cut of the whip,—never was there such a set of staid and orderly holiday makers. The cares of the lost Duchies, of invaded Jutland, of the fate of the Monarchy hanging in the scales held by the unsteady hand of diplomatists in London, did not seem to sit heavy on the brows of the motley multitude. They have a quiet, steady way of enjoying themselves; but they looked all light of heart, and the *atra cura* seemed to sit behind no rider's saddle. They alighted at the Bellevue, or at any other of the alehouses, tea-gardens, and other places of entertainment placed at the entrance of the extensive Deer Park. There their carriages were ranged together in long rows, crowding several acres of ground. They left their conveyances and thronged the gates of the Park; they poured in in large merry groups, they spread over the vast silent avenues, they enlivened the loneliness of the long-forsaken glades.

The Parc aux Cerfs, Dyr-have, or Deer Park, of Copenhagen, is one of the loveliest sylvan spots on the face of the globe. Imagine Kensington Gardens multiplied by ten or twenty in length and width, purified of London smoke, diversified by the happiest undulation of swelling

grounds, clumps of beech trees on every summit, not crowded together, forest-like, but every tree rising free in the air, tall and stately, and spreading out its branches to the ground—towards the ground—not quite to the ground, for the deer have been browsing at the lower boughs as far as they could reach; and the eye can range all along an almost straight line between the pale green foliage and ground, a line uninterrupted save by the heavy trunks tapering up whole and healthy, and free from all undergrowth.

Among the beeches, and among the firs, and the oaks, and the elms you may lose yourself for days; from hill to hill, from dell to dell, across meadow and along pond, you wander freely on the soft turf, till chance leads you to the Hermitage, a Royal Pavilion, or hunting-lodge, on a culminating point, whence you look over a woody wilderness, down broad avenues, far into the Sound, with the white-winged vessels skimming the waves, and the Swedish shore bathing in the noontide mist.

'Here was a whole town invading the rural scene, and plundering as they invaded. Every one of those gay promenaders helped himself to a sprig of green, helped himself and all who were with him. The people strolled about waving their stolen branches, a sylvan multitude, reminding one of the moving forest of Dunsinane.

The children romping about the crowded paths, the loving couples seeking the most unfrequented shades, the aged people basking in the sun in sheltered nooks—all were decked and wreathed with the new green; they handed it to one another, they waved it before each other's eyes. Alas! It is green just budding forth in the middle of May, sure to wither early in September. Make the most of it, ye poor Northern people! Do not forget that your year consists of 'nine months' winter and three months' no summer.'

Well, the good people of Copenhagen made the best of their Whitsuntide. At every step about the Park, chiefly near the entrances, there were huts and pavilions where hospitable people supplied their gay visitors with brass urns and hot water, nothing but the kettle and boiling water. The tea and the bread and butter every carriage had brought with it; cold fowls, too, and ham and sausage, and every variety of meat and cake for an *al fresco* lunch; the tables were spread on the turf throughout the whole extent of the Park. Copenhagen was dining to-day in the open; Bellevue had large parlours, the *traiteur* adjoining long tables groaning under the burden of a variety of cold meats. Hot dinners, choice

wines, costly viands were to be had at many of the publichouses; but, somehow, the open air gave zest to the feast, and 99 out of 100 of the assembled people banqueted on the green. Beer was not stinted, and champagne corks flew in the air, but I saw no instance of excess, no appearance of intoxication. Either the Danes are a very sober, moderate people, or they carry their liquor with an astounding equanimity and self-possession. Out of so many petty tradesmen, artisans, and shop clerks—out of so many hard-working men, cabmen, and carmen, I did not see one—I will not say reeling—but even at all flushed or jolly with drink; I did not hear one cross word spoken, did not see an angry look—if I except the solitary case of an Englishman who shouted out '*Esel!*' to the waiter who put him out of temper, using the only vituperative word probably with which he was familiar in the German language—a word which fell harmless on the Danish ears of the person so addressed, unintelligible in all likelihood, at any rate unheeded.

But now, even the never-ending day of this Northern climate gave sign of decline. The sun was low in the horizon, and Copenhagen turned its thoughts homewards. Cabs and cars were brought forward; the well-fed horses were put

to load after load; the holiday-makers set out, all clad in the new green. The return was as peaceful and orderly as the advance had been. There was no crowding or racing, no shouting, not even the most harmless bantering and chaffing on the road. They had all had their day of recreation and solace; they were in good humour with themselves and with one another; all glad to live and let live, and as loth to mar each other's enjoyment as to have their own interfered with or disturbed.

To-day, I believe, the holiday folk pay a second visit to the Deer Park. The great event of this second Whitsuntide feast is, however, the opening of the Casino with all its variety of theatrical, musical, and choregraphic attractions. Yesterday being Sunday they had only a performance of 'serious music,' whatever that might be, in that genial locality. But this evening the treat will be complete, and sorry would be the Copenhagen burgher who could not afford to have his share of its manifold enjoyments.

I have had a run for the last three days from Copenhagen to Elsinore, to Fredensborg, where there is a large Royal Park, to Fredericksborg, a Royal Castle in the Elizabethan style, lately burnt down, but which will now rise from its

ruins in the original style, war and bankruptcy permitting; and hence to Fredericksund on the Roeskilde Fiord, across the Fiord to Jägerspriis, a Royal domain on the Ise Fiord, now the seat of the 'fat, fair, and forty' Countess who found favour in the eyes of the late bluff King, Frederick VII.; and, finally, up the Roeskilde Fiord, to the town of that name, where curiosity led me to see the ancient Minster, the last abode of departed Danish Royalty. This Westminster Abbey, Hautecombe, or St. Denis, of Denmark, is a lofty, extensive red-brick building, a plain Gothic church with twin tapering spires, the original cruciform design of which is sadly disfigured by a number of Royal chapels, in every variety of more recent styles, clumsily bulging out at right angles on either side of the central nave. It was broad daylight at the time I passed the threshold, and the glaring sun poured in at the large windows, unchecked by blind or curtain, unsubdued by a single pane of stained glass. Those vivid sunbeams broke the spell of any solemnity that ever could be said to inhabit that lofty and simple, but exceedingly bare mass of brick; red-brick inside as well as out, with the unseemly, carefully scraped rows of which plain material, a grotesque organ, and a panel in the most gorgeous ornaments of the seventeenth century painfully contrasted.

Disappointing as it is as a Mediæval structure, Roeskilde is no less a failure as a burial place. Indeed it is, properly speaking, no place of sepulture at all; not, at least, for several generations of the deceased of Royal blood. The coffins of the Kings and Queens of the last four or five reigns, lie on the ground-floor, on the cold pavement, of the chapels which take their names from them—from that long muster of Christians and Fredericks which fill up every page of Danish history. There lie the coffins and their contents, mouldering in the open air, under the dust of centuries, still decked with their black-gilt palls, and the ever-green wreaths which piety, love, or royalty laid upon them,—a charnel house in the garish daylight, on a level with the ground, and in full sight of the worshippers on every side of the nave of the church. It is a strange and not a pleasing sight. The intention was, perhaps, that the bodies should lie each in its allotted place, till such time as marble monuments could either enclose it, or mark the spot where it was dissolving itself into dust deep in the vault beneath; but the design, if it ever was conceived, was but seldom carried into effect, and there are the bodies in a kind of limbo, encumbering the ground, and tainting the atmosphere of the main Danish house of worship. They might remind one of the row of mummy boxes at the British Museum;

and as I surveyed the strange display, and deciphered the inscriptions on the silver tablets on the coffin lids, I could not help thanking my stars that I was not of the blood Royal of Denmark, nor of any of the great and noble that are equally laid out in coffins above-ground in chapels of their own, and that my lot was not thus to be put up with them, like a book on a shelf, or a bottle in a bin, labelled and ticketed, bewailing the unlucky greatness that excludes them from the common home of all soulless clay, and dooming them to an unnatural community with the living.

Perhaps it was the aspect of all that death in life that gave a melancholy turn to the train of my thoughts. I thought how interesting it is to see by what an endless variety of means Providence enforces the immutable laws of Rise and Decline which govern all human affairs:—curious, for instance, to study the causes by which this poor Denmark has been brought to her present distress, a state which may be described as decline in youth. If there is a nation in the world upright and unblemished, perfectly sound and uncorrupted at the core, it is certainly this. At the same time, there is also no doubt that no land in Europe is blessed with a more solid, more univer-

sally-spread health and wealth, than this Northern kingdom. I have been wandering over some of the loveliest woodlands of Zealand,—woodlands mantled at last, near Midsummer, in all the luxuriancy of their youngest spring-green. What a paradise the land would be, if the inclemencies of heaven would only allow it! Thicker corn-fields than are to be seen all over the district, waving over the rich black soil under the severe blustering wind, so generous a profusion of manure, such plentiful well-to-do cattle, a land so flowing with milk and honey, it has hardly ever been my luck to visit. Every living creature seems to thrive. The meanest rustic dwelling is a cottage of contentment. The span of horses tramping forth from its farmyard is invariably in trim for a cattle show, and the peasant girl at its door, ruddy and stout, is also a picture of robust exuberance, hardly ever elegant, indeed, sometimes far from pretty, but fresh and bouncing, the very model for an Eve.

Somehow, however, thriving as the country looks and is, it is somewhat scantily inhabited. As you ride through it, in the midst of your enjoyment, a feeling of loneliness creeps over you. Even in these choice regions, almost within sight of the capital, anywhere away from the Sound, the sight of human dwellings strikes you as unfrequent. The condition of prosperity for the Danes

is that they should be few and quiet. I am told the results of the census are not cheering, showing an increase in the ratio of 1 per 100 yearly. Somehow, however, it does not seem as if this good Danish flock kept pace with other people's growth, that the land is far from being crowded is a fact which must satisfy the traveller through Denmark at every step. It is everywhere laid out in enormously large estates, and apparently belongs to few owners. It spreads before you in widely-undulating sweeps of field and meadow, with here and there a large farming establishment on some culminating spot, and only along the road, few and far between, the humbler abodes of the well-to-do labourer. Nor do the poorer classes, so far as my observation goes, cluster together in the towns. A more dismally empty place than Fredericksund, on the Roeskilde Fiord, I hardly ever beheld in my lifetime; and even Roeskilde itself, once the capital of Denmark, and even now the Escurial and Salamanca of the realm, chills me by its look—not, indeed, of decay or misery—but simply of blank, silent desolation. Surely, one would think, these districts have seen better days, and, if so, what ails them now? The climate is hard and fierce, no doubt, and allows little chance for any but the hardiest plants; but then it strengthens whatever it does not kill, and for those who attain their ripeness, life is almost

synonymous with vigorous health. Marriage is also the order of the day here; domestic affections make up the sum of all earthly bliss, and there is hardly a stock without a goodly number of growing branches. The Danish flock is not a numerous one, nevertheless, and there are everywhere, especially in Jutland, uncultivated districts. I am told the evil does not certainly arise from emigration. Yet the whole of Scandinavia had, in all epochs, expansive, wandering instincts. Here was the nursery of those sea-kings, who, owing either to immoderate powers of multiplication, or to dissatisfaction with their bleak and dreary climate, roamed the waves, the terror of their neighbours. The days of conquest and adventure came to an end, and the population settled down to peaceful pursuits. A proportion was found out between the capabilities of the land and the number of its cultivators, so that, at the present day, there seems to be in Denmark not one human being more and not one less than the country can afford to support or has occasion for. To every man his rood of ground, to every family its home, to every tribe its allotted share of happiness; and nothing more. Now this blessed economy of means and ends, this providential balance between demand and supply, can hardly spring from the native instincts of a people, however frugal and sober; it can hardly be the result of civil or social institutions, how-

ever wise and suitable; it can hardly be brought about by the sumptuary measures even of the most paternal Government. The secret of Denmark's well-being, and of the narrow, fixed limits of its population, must be sought, I was inclined to believe, in a constant, however latent, emigration. I am aware that in the far-west of America, in Wisconsin, in Iowa, in Oregon, communities are springing up, consisting of Northmen, many of them, I thought, from these Danish provinces. But here, again, I am met by statistical gentlemen, who assure me the out-wanderers from Denmark Proper are but few, and most of those colonists come from the barren regions of the Norwegian mountains. Be it so. The mercantile navy of all countries, however, especially of Great Britain and the United States, are in a considerable measure manned by Danes. The draining of the surplus population by these means, however unperceived, and unappreciable by official calculation, must be steady and incessant. The Dane, however well-behaved and self-controlled, is still at heart restless and adventurous. However fond of home, he can hardly be in love with his climate. He finds in his country a perfect order, which he has no power and no inclination to disturb; the lands apportioned as if by providential dispensation; earthly blessings bestowed upon each man according to the claims of birth

and station; his own share insufficient even for his limited wants. Dissatisfied with his lot, he tries his luck elsewhere. The whole world is country for a good and true man, and the Scandinavian, no less than the German and Briton, is destined to people the earth. The colonizing instinct is strong at the heart of all Northern races, and even expatriation is for the Dane a proof of patriotism. He seeks out a new home for himself abroad, that there may be plenty of room for his brothers in his father's home.

However wonderfully well this 'out-wandering' system may work on the general welfare and tranquillity of the Danish community, it is certain, nevertheless, that it adds neither to its strength nor to its importance as a European Power. The time has come, it seems, in which a small flock, a dwindling or even a slowly-growing flock, has no right to exist. During the last fifty years' peace, I am told, Sweden has been adding hundreds of thousands to its scanty population. The Swedes are said to be in many respects the reverse of what the Danes are: a dirty, unthrifty, tipsy set. Still they are a numerous set, and there are productive, self-redeeming powers in mere numbers. In an age—an iron age like ours—when small States are invaded and dismembered simply because they are small, and minor nationalities absorbed only because

they are in the minority, Denmark is made to feel all the bitterness of the lot of a country 'where wealth accumulates and men decay.' The Danish nation is undegenerate, unbroken; it has shown how stoutly it can fight against odds —two to one, three to one; but the contest was between two millions and forty, and 'the good God always declares in favour of the biggest battalions.'

Now, this dwindling of the Danish race, determined by the accumulation of property in a few hands, upon a farming system on too large a scale, and the consequent emigration of the needier classes, is not by any means the greatest evil of Denmark. The worst is that the land accumulates, not in Danish, but in foreign hands. In point of expansiveness, enterprise, and perseverance, the Dane has found a dangerous rival in his Teutonic neighbour. From the darkest ages the nobles, the Rittershaft of German Holstein, contrived to gain possession of the finest estates of Danish Schleswig. Even at the present day the Holsteiner, the Hanoverian, the Mecklenburgian are buying not merely the Schleswiger, but even the Jutlander, out of house and home, whilst, by a strange coincidence, the wealthiest Copenhagen merchants are by a variety of causes induced to give the Swedish land, in Schonen, a preference for the investment of their money. The invading

nature of the German is perceptible everywhere, all round the limits of the ancient empire, far out into Magyar, Sclavonic, and all other, except Italian lands. It is especially observable in these Danish provinces, both of the mainland and the islands. German industry monopolizes the trade, especially the petty trade of the minor towns. Trade begets capital, capital buys up the land. To the Dane hardly any alternative is left except emigration, or a hard lot as the drudge, the serf of the German. Can there be any doubt as to his choice? At Flensburg, at Apenrade, at Hadersleben, the people are either purely German or utterly Germanized; the rural population is mainly Danish. The German brings larger means, higher intelligence, to bear on the cultivation of the soil. The wealthier race becomes the ruling power; it gives its own bent to the progress of civilization; it takes such an ascendancy over education, over the whole social system, as no mere political institutions can withstand. The country is assimilated long before it is claimed; and when the contest between the rival nationalities is referred to the arbitrament of the sword, it is found that the original landmarks have been silently displaced, that one race has imperceptibly shrunk back before the overwhelming tide of the other; and the world is simply called upon to sanction politically a revolution

which has for years been socially accomplished. It is thus that Schleswig, or a great part of it, at least, will, in all probability, be acknowledged to have long since been lost for Denmark. It is thus that Jutland may, at no very distant period, give signs of its unequivocal inclination to follow.

It may be too late at the present hour, yet it may still be worth while for the Danes to inquire to what extent their social organization, admirably as it seems to work for inner purposes, is chargeable with the remote causes of the calamities that threaten them from abroad, and to what extent also their system admits of such modification as may ward off such evils as are still impending.

It has often occurred to me to allude, though very briefly, to the peculiar hardships that are apt to beset a 'Special Correspondent' in the camp. Short commons, no quarters, scanty allowance of linen and water, worry, noise, weariness. In spite of a decent hotel, and ample leisure, the life of your correspondent in town has also its own difficulties to contend with—of a different nature, certainly, but hardly less galling and harassing. Out at head-quarters you have only comrades and friends; here, in the city, you find readers and critics. You do not, of course, when you write, expect to please everybody; but you are hardly prepared to find that you have

displeased everybody. The German papers call me '*ein fanatischer Dänenfreund*,' and in that capacity they think I have pushed my sympathies with Denmark to such extremities as to deserve at their hands the elegant appellations of '*Lügner und Verleumder*.' It seems hard, after all that, to be told by your Danish friends that you are 'seriously damaging their cause;' but the Danes are not the first people for whom I write, nor yet the dearest to my heart; nor have I now to learn for the first time that what 'Philip drunk' will proclaim in a high voice about himself to-day will give 'Philip sober' mortal offence if repeated, even in the most guarded language, by a stranger to-morrow.

The Danes are a self-controlled, highly-disciplined people. Political passions seldom run very high among them, popular commotions are rare, and not dangerous; rancours, suspicions, calumnies, can no more thrive among them than noxious reptiles in certain hallowed islands of the blessed. Still there are parties even in Denmark; there is a Government and an Opposition, an army and a people, a War-office in the capital, a general commanding in the field. Steer clear, if you can, of their petty wranglings and bickerings; choose your path between diverging views and conflicting interests; listen to right and left, and see if you can manage to agree with either

party, or if you can avoid making yourself obnoxious to both.

The abandonment of the Dannewerke and the non-evacuation of Dybböl have given rise to a certain amount of mutual reproach and recrimination. Both measures were, in all probability, matters of sheer necessity; both were, perhaps, defensible on military as well as on political grounds. Time being given for reflection, parties have come to an understanding, and have shaken hands thereupon. But on the first outbreak of the intelligence, great unpopularity naturally attached to those measures, and their authors shifted its weight from each other's shoulders, and acted somewhat on the *sauve qui peut* principle. It was 'the Commander's fault,' 'the War Minister's,' 'the Premier's;' the charge was even laid on 'higher shoulders.' Your correspondent said nothing on his own responsibility; he merely reported everybody's talk; and when notes were compared and anger had cooled, and it was found that 'no one was to blame,' it was contended that 'the wicked correspondent was at the bottom of all the mischief; that it was all pure invention or evil construction on his part.' Be it so. For my own part, I have always tried to do justice to the good intentions of all persons connected with the management of public affairs in Denmark; and were it even manifest that 'some one had blundered,'

it is certainly not I who shall lay claim to infallibility.

There is nothing calculated to give more grievous offence to the good people of this place than to designate them as the 'Copenhagen mob.' I have used that expression myself on one or two occasions, and am in duty bound to explain my meaning, so as to define not only what have been the behaviour and attitude of the population of the capital during the various vicissitudes through which the Danish Monarchy has passed, but also what is their disposition of mind at the present most critical juncture.

In a freely-constituted community, with a free press and an open Parliament, any attempt on the part of the people to influence Government otherwise than by strictly legal means, must be set down as the act of a mob. When, upon receiving the first tidings of the abandonment of the Dannewerk, the Copenhagen people gathered tumultuously about the streets, crying 'Death to the King!' and smashing the windows of the Minister's house, as we learn from Sir Augustus Paget's despatch in the Blue Book, they were out of the law and were no less a mob—indeed, all the more a mob—because all or most of them were dressed in broad cloth. That the provoca-

tion was very great, that the honour of their country seemed to be greatly compromised by that unaccountable and as yet not satisfactorily accounted-for backward movement in Schleswig, and that the blunder was deemed so enormous as almost to justify the suspicion of treachery—we must all be ready to admit. The ebullition of the people's temper was, however, momentary, and, as it providentially turned out, perfectly harmless. Bishop Monrad explained the conduct of the Government before the Rigsraad on the following day, and with that explanation, such as it was, the so-called 'mob' was perforce satisfied. Since then there has not even been a gathering of the crowd, washed or unwashed, at Copenhagen. Dybböl was held, when it was imperative that the army should be withdrawn from inevitable destruction; Fredericia was evacuated when, according to competent military authority, it might have been honourably and successfully held for weeks; and the Copenhagen citizens have received the intelligence of successes or reverses, they have silently submitted to the resolutions of their Government, or have privately and publicly commented upon them, but with the most perfect calmness and most exemplary resignation.

That the terror of that solitary instance of popular outbreak should so have haunted the men at the head of affairs as to drive them to

improvident and palpably inconsistent measures, it was at one time but too natural to surmise, but we have now the most positive assurance of Bishop Monrad that he acted under no such pressure, and that his judgment was in no instance biassed by popular clamour. The Copenhagen mob must be acquitted of all participation in the policy of the Government, and the question rather is whether, owing to the purely democratic institutions which constitute the boast of Denmark, it may be said that the Government itself is a mob, that it too directly and immediately emanates from the multitude and follows the impulse of the multitude, no matter in how legal and orderly a manner the opinion of that multitude may contrive to manifest itself.

Whatever may be the effects of a mere paper Constitution upon the social organization of a country after fourteen or fifteen years' working, I am convinced that Denmark is not, and will not for a long time, be a democratic community. The Government issues from a Parliament elected on a tolerably broad basis, and what would be called in England the 'governing classes' are to a certain extent excluded from public affairs. They are, however, only self-excluded. The new order of things has been established on the footing

of a perfect equality of rights; the nobles have only been deprived of those privileges and preferences which they enjoyed under this as under all despotic Governments on the Continent, not owing to any legally-defined or acknowledged right, but simply to long-established custom and the ascendancy of courtly favour. Rank and wealth were in themselves power, and they have ceased to be so, since by the removal of all ancient barriers access to power has been opened to all capacities, irrespective of social pre-eminence and domestic patronage. *La carrière étant ouverte aux talents*, it was natural that the old aristocracy should keep aloof and shrink from competition: first, because accustomed, as it was, to rely upon its own advantages of family and caste, it had neglected the culture of the needful talents; and, secondly, also, because it disdained a contact with the new men with whom the race was to be run, and scorned a power which was to be shared with persons who had hitherto been so jealously excluded from it. Denmark is not, however, for all that a democratic country, and it is not, perhaps, in the nature of things that it ever should be so. The Danish aristocracy is still compact and unbroken; it relies for its continuance on that law of primogeniture which neither here nor in the North of Germany any democratic Legislature has ever dreamt, or could ever, perhaps, dream of abolishing.

That aristocracy has only temporarily abandoned, but not definitely abdicated, its power. It will take some time, perhaps, before it truly understands the spirit and accommodates itself to the exigencies of the new era, but it is sure to bow to necessity in the end. It will have to enter the lists with those popular candidates whom it is now shunning; it will have to beat them on their own ground and fight them with their own weapons, and if really all public careers are fairly open to all capacities it is not easy to conceive why the advantages of birth and rank, if backed by wealth and the means of a liberal education, can be a hindrance to any man, and less so to a set of men having a community of interests, and by a natural instinct joining in a common purpose and playing into each other's hands.

Denmark is at this present moment in a state of transition, and has only governing men; but she has not, like France or Italy, for ever destroyed the elements of the future governing classes. Were this country allowed to run a free and prosperous career, I have little doubt but it would be organized after the English, not after what is called on the Continent the 'democratic,' model. The nature of the people here seems to me very far from the development of those envious and rancorous feelings, of those destructive

levelling tendencies which in some countries go by the name of democratic principles.

Denmark, be it borne in mind, is, like England, and more than England, essentially a rural, not an urban community. There is no city in the whole State except Copenhagen, and Copenhagen is rather a mart for Scania, or Schonen, the southern part of the Scandinavian peninsula, than either for the Duchies and Jutland, or even for the two islands of Fünen and Zealand themselves. It is a great *entrepôt* for goods passing from Germany to Sweden. The commercial centre for the Danish provinces is, or was till very lately, rather to be sought in Hamburg or Lübeck than in this town. Not a few of the most opulent families here, as I have just stated, own large property on Swedish territory across the Sound. For the rest, the Danes, especially on the mainland, are a country-loving people. Not a few of the wealthiest families live on their own estates the whole year long in spite of the severity of the climate, and those who quit their homes in quest of pleasure are more frequently to be found in Hamburg, Berlin, Brussels, or Paris in winter, and at Ems or Wiesbaden in summer, than in any of their dull provincial towns, or even in this not particularly lively capital. Now, it is in the nature of all rural and almost exclusively agricultural communities to

be conservative and aristocratic; and, whatever I may hear to the contrary, I have great difficulty in bringing myself to the belief that Democracy has penetrated much below the surface in Denmark. Even in this town I see no sign of the noise and turbulence of rampant Democracy. The Copenhagen people are the best behaved, most orderly, dignified, obliging, and amiable people in the whole world. They are the least excitable, at least the most undemonstrative. You never hear them shouting for a victory; never see them downcast after a reverse. They go to their business unmoved; they take their pleasure unconcerned. Nothing seems to disturb the even tenour of their existence; their casinos are open; their *cafés chantants* frequented as usual. The papers are full of the new French *danseuse*, of the English acrobat, of the Italian pyrotechnist, who are to inaugurate the summer season at Tivoli to-morrow evening. One might feel tempted to ascribe all this to indolence on the part of the Copenhagen citizens and indifference to the destinies of their country; but it is not so; the Danes are a self-controlled, moderate, earnest people. Their feelings work inwardly and only show themselves in actual deeds, in frequent and splendid instances of charity, devotion, and sacrifice. They do not parade their troubles in the streets, nor suffer

their emotions to interfere with their usual round of duty or even pleasure; indeed, they rather affect Stoicism, and shun sympathy and condolence.

It is in the nature of all people, when hard pressed by a complication of foreign adversities, further to weaken their position by domestic divisions, and although the Danes have hitherto proceeded throughout this dolorous period with rare unanimity of resolve, still it should be no wonder if some symptoms of party animosity began to develope themselves. It is only since the conclusion of the armistice that I begin to hear murmurs of the views and designs of a 'reactionary faction.' There is a small penny journal here, which is looked upon as the organ of the *laudatores temporis acti*. It is supposed to be writing in the interest and under the inspiration of old statesmen who signed their names to the Treaty of London of 1852, and who blame their successors for involving the country in all its present calamities by the reckless violation of the terms of that Treaty. This opposition makes as yet but little noise; its discontent may never, perhaps, gather to a head; and it is only by the outcry of its adversaries that one becomes aware of its existence. There

is but little, or, indeed, no political stir here at present, owing, perhaps, to the long recess of the Rigsraad; the Danish character is calm and deliberate, and the Government, which was mild and provident even in its absolutism, has been 'democratized,' as it is called, by the new constitution without even the shadow of a popular commotion. Still there is a 'liberal,' or 'national,' —what is called an 'Eider-Dane'—party, which came into power upon the first outbreak of the Schleswig-Holstein difficulty, and it is thought to have complicated and aggravated it by its sweeping measures and uncompromising tendencies. Against this, which is the dominant party, and which is further pushed on by an even more extreme set, the so-called 'reactionaries' are now arraying themselves. This retrogradist movement is not so much aimed against the too liberal Constitution, for its influence has as yet been little felt either for good or evil; nor has it arisen from a desire to uphold aristocratic interests, for the nobility here is supine and inoffensive enough. The whole subject of dispute lies in the causes of the war, and in the means of bringing it to a conclusion. According to some politicians of the old school, the incorporation of Schleswig to the Danish monarchy and the *re-nationalization* of the German districts of that duchy have been too rashly attempted and too violently carried on.

The Government undertook to achieve impossibilities, and the consequence was a disastrous war, bringing the Monarchy to the very brink of ruin. The evil is done, and to some extent irreparable; and the question reduces itself to this point—whether it is still possible, without altogether undoing the past, to escape from its worst consequences by submitting to the exigencies of the present.

The Eider-Dane party, the vast majority of this people, the only one whose voice was to be heard hitherto, were for defending every inch of ground against the Germans to the last drop of blood: they are now for yielding as much ground as can no longer be defended, but, in the worst of cases to cut the question of nationality with the edge of the sword, and to constitute a Danish Monarchy, however reduced in territory, on a sound, compact, homogeneous basis. The reactionary party think that the case of the integrity of Denmark is not yet quite desperate; that an arrangement with the enemy on some terms of personal union is still practicable, and that it behoves a conquered State to accept the decree of fate and acquiesce in the inevitable. This party, as I repeatedly said, seems to have no very extensive support among the people, and it is, at any rate, extremely quiet and cautious. That the Eider-Dane party have, however, gone

too far, and that they have indisposed some of their own less enthusiastic and uncompromising adherents, and especially arrayed against themselves some even of the most patriotic officers in the army, seems to me a very notorious fact. The Danish army has made heroic efforts; it has stood for three months in the breach against such odds as might almost have justified immediate submission; but it cannot look without uneasiness to the renewal and indefinite prolongation of such an unequal struggle. No wonder, therefore, if some of its members begin to lose their confidence in the democratic partisans of 'war at any cost,' and in their hearts sympathize with those who think that human wishes should be circumscribed within the limits of their probable attainment.

Whatever may be thought of the disposition of mind of these parties, there is certainly no apprehension of violent outbreaks. I hardly know whether it may be ascribed to the wisdom of the Governors or to the instinctive docility of the governed, but the fact is that Europe had nowhere, even in the worst of times, a better organized, more leniently handled set of people than these. It is not in the nature of the Dane to exercise tyranny; and even the malcontents in

Schleswig and Holstein never preferred any complaint against their rulers for extortions, for maladministration of justice, for vexatious police restraints, or for political persecution. As all that mild and gentle treatment had the effect to produce a state of easy contentment in days of absolutism, so the temper given by its long influence to the people, will have power to prevent any such exasperation of political passions in these times of freedom, as may give the Government any serious cause of alarm. Happy Denmark if she were as safe from external aggression as she is from domestic riot and convulsion!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONFERENCE.

Hopes and Fears of the Danes.—England and France *v.* Denmark.—Nationality and Language in Schleswig.—The Armistice.—Behaviour of the Austro-Prussians in Jutland.—The 'Bird of Prey.'—The Man-Horse.—Endurance of the Danes.—Their Charity and Humanity.

May 15-31.

THE Danes are brought to a state which is neither war nor peace; and, strange to say, they do not seem to consider it a particularly uncomfortable condition of being. Dybböl is gone and Als is going; Fredericia fallen; Jutland as freely open to invasion as Schleswig; Hegermann-Lindenkrone, with his 3,500 horse and foot, is eluding the Austrians in some far-away corner of the Cimbrian peninsula, dodging the enemy behind some inlet of the sea, watching his opportunity to embark, and take himself and the fortunes of Denmark out of the lost mainland.

On this side the Little Belt, at Strib and Middlefart, the Dannebrog is still waving defiance to the German birds of prey, one-headed and two-headed; bent, to all appearance, upon defending

the Island of Fünen to the utmost. Defence, however, necessarily implies attack; and it, moreover, supposes, on the part of the defenders, means somewhat commensurate with the forces of the assailants. Should the Germans really make the attempt to force their way across the strait, it is not so certain that all the strength of what still remains of the little Danish army would have power to hinder them, or to hold any part of the island against them; not, at least, until the Danes can muster in the field better artillery than they now have—an artillery which, as experience has shown, is no more a match for the Prussian rifled cannon than a penknife is for a sword-blade. The Danes, however, are not so very sanguine as to their ability to keep Fünen if the Germans put forth their strength to take it. They foresee the day in which all their dominions may be reduced to their sovereign island of Zealand; nor are they confident that even their boasted maritime superiority may not vanish before the combined efforts of the German and Austrian fleets, and that the war may not be brought to the shores of the Sound and to the bastions of their capital.

We have all read of that barbaric King whose ambitious plans expanded upon every suggestion of what was to follow after the fulfilment of each scheme of conquest. Syria after Egypt, Media after Syria, and Bactria, and India—and then?

The Danes reverse all that, and you cannot drive them into a corner and obtain an answer to your question as to what will be left to lose after all is lost. Jutland after Schleswig, Fünen after Jutland, the fleet, and the capital. What next? When nothing is left to fight for, will they make peace? Will they accept their conqueror's terms when not an inch of ground remains whereon to sign their name to the treaty?

The Danes ventured upon this war upon false expectations. They thought that it was neither for the honour nor for the interest of Europe that they should be sacrificed. They trusted to the chapter of accidents. They felt sure that something would turn up in their favour; that they could not be without natural allies or protectors in the world. They are now in the condition of a gambler who has staked his all on a losing card; they are growing desperate, and contend that the 'Red' must turn up after all; so long as there is life there is hope; the game has only to be kept up, and where a defender failed, an avenger may arise. Europe immolates them to her anxious love of peace; she would not fight to keep them alive; she may have to battle over their grave, and be involved in their ruin.

The political horizon is certainly not unfavourable to those who are on the look-out for squalls. Schleswig and Holstein have been taken from

Denmark, but it is not very clear for whose benefit they were conquered. They are claimed on behalf of Germany. But who, as yet, has been able to make out what is Germany? Success has done wonders towards identifying Prussia with that misty abstraction, and the German papers already cry out not only for the annexation of the 'sea-girt' provinces to the Brandenburg monarchy, but also for the rallying of the Vaterland nationality round the throne of the Hohenzollern. Will Austria ever reconcile herself to the blunder which made her instrumental in placing the German *hegemony* in the hands of her hereditary rival? Will she allow it to be said that she was stupid enough to help to enrich Prussia with the spoils of Denmark, and to enlist in her favour those suffrages of German patriotism which the Cabinet of Berlin had from 1813 to 1863 done all in its power to alienate? Will Austria avow that she has thus cut her own throat, and lavished her gold and blood to shut herself out of Germany?

These are the questions the Danes put to themselves, and they are ready to reckon upon their present Austrian foe as a possible future ally. They are aware, also, that there are three Germanies in the field; that there is in the Free Cities, in the small Courts, in the democratic unions of that besotted Vaterland, a party no less

hostile to Prussian ambition than Austria herself. There is the Augustenburg faction, the Universal Suffrage party. Prussia will have to settle with them; she will have to settle with those who sympathize with them.

Suppose Prussia takes Holstein, Schleswig, Jutland, Fünen, Zealand, the Sound; suppose the prestige of conquest wins over to her every patriotic heart in Germany; suppose she snubs the Frankfort Diet, spurns the small fry of Princes, beats Austria from the field, builds up the old Empire of the Othos and the Hohenstaufen,—she may not be out in her reckoning with Germany; but what of the rest of Europe? The annexation of Holstein, and even of a part of Schleswig, to a strong German State, infallibly leads to the occupation of the Sound and the maritime supremacy of Germany in the Baltic at no distant period. Will Denmark be the only loser by such an arrangement? Have Russia, Sweden, and England nothing to say to it? The aspirations of Germany are boundless. They are in inverse ratio with the state of prostration and impotence in which the country has so long been lying. It is because the Germans are nothing that they expect to become everything. Should the Teutonic ox only get rid of the iron ring which his rulers have cunningly driven through his nose, he would become a very bull in the

European china-shop. Mayhap there are those who find it is for the common good that the useful animal should thus be ringed and chained to his stall. Mayhap France is not in a hurry to have so powerful a neighbour near her, and is not to be propitiated by the little strip of territory in the valley of the Sarre with which Prussia might hope to compound for the consent of the Emperor Napoleon to her projected aggrandizement. The 'rectification of her natural frontiers' is, doubtless, a great object with that country which has just annexed Savoy and Nice. The question is whether France would gain more by thwarting or by humouring her Rhenish neighbour. The great Imperial cat has been pretending to be asleep all the time these German mice had their dance and carouse. It was not without an inward purr that he saw the incautious Prussian removing his neighbour's landmarks. 'Go on, gentlemen,' he said in his heart, 'trample on the sacredness of old treaties; appeal to the right of the strongest; set up the cry of nationality; hallow the principle of universal suffrage; trouble the waters of Europe, and let us see who shall fish the deepest into them!'

The war in Denmark, the Danes think, began with the silent consent of France; it can hardly terminate without her outspoken fiat. Whatever Prussia and Germany may gain by their ag-

gressive policy, they have surely placed themselves at the mercy of the Emperor Napoleon. They will either have to relinquish their hold of Danish territory, or they will have to make amends to France either by a spontaneous offer or by a forcible spoliation. And how can France be won over by a paltry district on the Sarre, when she can seize upon a whole region on the Rhine? Oh! but England and Russia and all Powers interested in the public order of Europe will stand up for Belgium, at least, if not for the Prussian provinces on the Rhine. Possibly. But they will have equally to uphold the rights of Denmark on her own possessions. Europe is a castle of cards, and the whole edifice topples down if only one of the pasteboards on which it is based be removed. Nothing easier than to sacrifice Denmark and leave her to her fate. Hardly possible to avoid a universal subversion of the existing state of things; hardly possible to escape the dangers of a general European war.

If you ask me whether I think any person in this country expects any results whatever from the proceedings of the London Conference, I shall not hesitate to give you a frank negative answer. The Danes think they have gained little, as yet,

from their deference to foreign Powers, and bitterly regret their compliance with well-meant but improvident advice. 'Had it not been especially for England's officiousness,' they say, 'they would not have yielded their ground inch by inch at the outbreak of the war, nor would they have consented to the raising of the blockade at the armistice. It was not her sympathy for the weaker side, nor regard for the justice of their cause, that England listened to.' They say, 'She merely consulted her own commercial interests, and sacrificed Denmark to her anxiety for the general peace and the uninterrupted freedom of the seas. Those objects are henceforth more easily to be attained by dropping than by sustaining the rights of the Danish nation, and when, after the loss of a month or two, the London negotiation breaks up, as sensible men foresaw it would from the outset, leaving matters exactly as they were, England will consider she has done her duty by Denmark, and the latter will be left at the mercy of her overbearing foes.' It is not for me to inquire how much justice there may be in this complaint, which is everywhere audible here. Unquestionably, by their dilatoriness and by their lack of energy in carrying out their own resolutions, it would appear as if the statesmen now assembled in London were not greatly in earnest. The skein is tangled beyond the unravelling

powers of all human ingenuity, and there is hardly a man who would not shrink from proposing to cut the knot by that terrible sword of a European war, to avoid which so many other questions of vital importance have been for many years left in abeyance.

As all hopes from the conclusion of the Conference and all confidence in the goodwill of England are dying away in the heart of these Danes, their thoughts are naturally turning to France, and there is a general belief here that on the Schleswig-Holstein complication dropping from the hands of the London statesmen, it will by the Danish Government be referred to the arbitration of the Emperor Napoleon. It was the boast of that mighty Monarch, they think, that not a cannon should be fired on the Continent of Europe without his good pleasure, and that no one in the world should have a right to stir when France was satisfied. (*Quand la France est satisfaite, le monde est tranquille.*) This would be tantamount to saying that in the fiat of the ruler of that country all other Powers should acquiesce. Let Napoleon III. only say the word, and the bitter cup shall pass from Denmark's lips. The day in which Prussia may have to hold her own on the Rhine she will be fain to withdraw on any terms from the Eider and the Elbe. The task of maintaining the European peace, or rather of

avoiding a European war, has become a very arduous one for the French Emperor himself, nevertheless. The joint interest of Prussia, Austria, and Russia in the utter extinction of what is yet left of Polish nationality, it is now manifest, suggests a coalition between those three Northern Powers, which even Imperial France may not be willing to confront single-handed. The assurances of support given by the Czar to the Prussian Cabinet are a mystery to no man here; they are, at least, a matter of pretty general belief. Against the million of combatants that the revived Holy Alliance would be sure to bring into the field even strongly-armed France could muster no adequate means of resistance. The mind of the Emperor of the French is too practical to lay any stress on such a broken reed as the co-operation of oppressed nationalities; and as for a real, cordial, good understanding between him and England, why, the Crimean war, the Mexican expedition, the projected Congress, and all the playing at fast and loose in this Danish matter itself, preclude all hope of any arrangement to that effect.

The Emperor Napoleon, moreover, is tied down by his own precedents. He has already thrown out clear hints of his inclination to apply to the Schleswig-Holstein ailment his panacea of an appeal to universal suffrage. To the Danes

the remedy, under all circumstances, would be the worst of evils, and the reference to that test in their case, in the interest of Powers like Prussia and Austria, to whom the application of a similar ordeal in their own homes would be the signal of a general break-up, seems the very height of absurdity and iniquity. Drowning men will catch at a straw, however, and, although there is so much more to fear than to hope from France, it seems evident to me that the Danes, uneasy at the hostile attitude of Russia, and weary of the lukewarm and unprofitable friendship of England, turn for safety exclusively to *that* quarter.

While the din of arms has subsided for a spell of four weeks, and the London diplomatists are leisurely deliberating how their clumsy armistice is to be cobbled up into a peace which may prove perhaps no less hollow, the war of the nationalities is waging hotter than ever in distracted Schleswig-Holstein. It is not, thank Heaven! a war of revolvers and bowie-knives, for the people on either side, North-German and Danish, are equally upright and humane, abhorrent of treachery and bloodshed; accustomed to live side by side in perfect amity, and without just cause for mutual ill-will. Neither is it a

war of street riot and scuffle, for the instinct of order is strong among the multitude, and political passions have hardly ruffled the surface of their imperturbable equanimity. The mass of the people would have given Europe little trouble enough if they had been left quiet, for they are a thriving, loyal, highly-educated, intensely agricultural, conservative community, accustomed to bow to such rulers as Heaven may send them, warding off oppression by passive legal resistance, and well sure, with the donkey in the fable, that 'no master can get them to carry a double burden.'

The war in the Duchies is simply a war of the demagogues. Stump-orators in Rendsburg, and rabid newspaper scribblers in Hamburg, may well talk of the 'crushing yoke' and 'hideous tyranny' of the Danish Government, but the Prince of Augustenburg knows better than to indulge in such claptrap. He only speaks of 'imprescriptible right' and 'unshaken conviction,' whatever that may mean. The word 'nationality' never once escaped his lips. The Schleswig-Holsteiners are to be his simply, it seems, because his father accepted his mess of pottage, and sold his birthright. There is no lack of cracked enthusiasts, however, to do the dirty work for him; the movement is purely patriotic, strictly national; it is the pretended revendica-

tion by Germany of the rights of a German population; and the test of nationality is to be the language.

This test, however, turns out to be fallacious in some of the most important districts. In Flensburg, for instance, where the citizens use German as a familiar idiom, Danish sympathies are still strongly developing themselves; some of the wealthiest merchants, some of the most influential burgesses, attached to the old order of things by traditional reflections, bound to the Danish monarchy by material interests, resist democratic clamour with the stubborn tenacity natural to all Northern people; and it is against them that the noisy agitators, backed by such worthless rabble, domestic or foreign, as is to be brought together even in the most orderly community, and countenanced by the double-dealing behaviour of the Commissioners administering the country in behalf of the invading German Powers, direct all the attacks of their petty spite and malevolence. The town council at Flensburg has been summarily dismissed; the Danish officials, the clergy, the most inoffensive individuals, have been driven from their homes on the mere suspicion of 'lukewarm Germanism.' Flagstaffs have been planted before the doors of houses that were deemed backward in their zeal for the patriotic cause, with an intimation that the

'Schleswig-Holstein colours should wave from those staffs in the morning;' on the morrow those staffs had been 'blown down by the wind.' The fact is that Schleswig-Holsteinism does not spontaneously gain ground in Flensburg, and may have to be imposed upon the town by sheer violence.

Germanism has been in possession of Schleswig for the last three months; but it is questionable whether in this case possession will be equivalent to nine-tenths of the law. The Schleswigers are at heart a Danish people, whatever may be in some of their districts the acquired language. It is curious to read in German histories by what a succession of efforts, by what a variety of circumstances, the German language was forced upon these people. Up to the seventeenth century Danish was the common language, as far as Schleswig and Eckernförde; only on the west coast the Frisians spoke their own dialect, and along the Eider the low German of Holstein had partially crept in. But the feudal lords of the country, bent on the dismemberment of the Duchy from the Danish Crown, turned all their efforts to the utmost spread of that Plat-Deutsch, which was the language of their Court, of their nobility, and of their officials; laws and ordinances were published in that idiom, and the low German was to all intents and purposes the State language

until the spread of the Reformation substituted the high German instead. The young nobles and the clergy were educated at the German Universities, and a high school was opened at Haderslev, or Hadersleben, a purely Danish town, for the mere purpose of promoting this Hoch Deutsch, which had in its turn become the dominant language. It was during this period that the very names of the country underwent an almost universal modification. Localities which had been originally designated by Danish words having a proper meaning were Germanized either by a clumsy attempt at translation, or by mere clipping and disfiguring, by what Max Müller calls 'phonetic corruption,' so as to reduce them to mere empty sounds. It was thus, for instance, that Graasten (Greystone) was turned into Gravenstein, Aabenraa (open port or roadstead) into Apenrade, Lyksborg into Glücksburg, Nyböl into Nübel, Dybböl into Düppel, Rönhave into Rönhof, &c. A people purely and essentially Danish was being for years polished, fashioned, licked into Germanism. From the year 1616 to 1720, under the hereditary Dukes of the House of Oldenburg, most of the parsons and schoolmasters were imported from Germany. In the year 1636, in the town and territory of Flensburg, it was enacted that Divine service 'should be performed exclusively in the German lan-

guage.' The Duke Frederick IV. of Gottorp expressed his determination to 'root out the Danish language altogether from his dominions.' Something like a reaction set in after 1720, when the Duchy of Schleswig was re-incorporated with the Danish Monarchy. In 1739, Christian VI. ordered that 'no clergyman or schoolmaster should be for the future installed in his office, unless he were able to instruct the people in the Danish as well as in the German languages.' Such provisions, however, were not easily to be carried into execution. The teachers of the young not only continued to give their pupils a German education, but strove, by the means of the growing generation, to make the language which came easier to themselves the household idiom among the rural population. The Danish language, although everywhere driven back and encroached upon, held its ground in a considerable part of Schleswig, nevertheless. In Haderslev, in Aabenraa, in Alsen, in a part of Tondern, and in other large districts, you frequently meet with country people unable to understand a single word of German. On the other hand, in the country round Flensburg, and especially in Angeln, as I was able to ascertain by personal observation, both languages are indifferently used. In one village, the peasantry pride themselves upon being *Dansk*; in others, they profess themselves *Dütsch* (Low German).

It is upon the strength of these complicated and unsatisfactory philological circumstances that the so-called German patriots have set up their cry of nationality, and kindled a war which the London Conference will hardly, I think, bring to a close. Even supposing that the future political rights of Europe were to be grounded on the basis of nationality, it is impossible to assert that the Schleswigers are, by that right, Germans. You may as well say that the peasantry of the Val d'Aosta, those of the Waldensian Valleys of Pinerolo, the Vaudois of Vevey and Lausanne, or the Belgian Flamands, are French. The culture in all these countries is to a certain extent French. Political vicissitudes and religious instruction have caused the language of France to become the civilized means of communication, and a stranger who does not inquire very deep is apt to take as a test of the real nature of the people every doubtful symptom that may be merely floating on the surface; but the landmarks that the hand of God has traced between the different tribes of mankind are not easily removed, the character that He has imprinted on each human family is not readily effaced, and all the ethnographical subtleties of a household of professors will never do away with the fact that the Eider was providentially intended as a parting line between the Dane and the Teuton.

But, whatever the Schleswigers may be proved to be—whatever they may even be made to wish to be (for to what results will not universal suffrage, properly managed, lead?)—this is certainly not the case in which the test of nationality should be applied. Nationality is a sacred principle, and it is precisely because it is such that, like all hallowed things, it is most liable to be flagrantly abused. Every nation has a clear right to a separate, independent existence. Such a right is exercised by France and England; it has been vindicated by Italy; it is claimed by Poland; it will most readily be allowed to Germany whenever she may choose to stand up for it. But it does not equally apply to every branch of a people whom circumstances may have cut off from the parent stock and associated to the destinies of another community, unless, at least, that severed limb evinces very strong tendencies towards its reunion to its main body; unless foreign domination may be proved to be excessively galling and overbearing, and the oppressed nationality give very strong, spontaneous, and unequivocal symptoms of having the power, no less than the will, to be rid of it. The canton Ticino and the island of Corsica are very surely and very indisputably Italian, and Posen is Polish, and Alsatia and Lorraine are German; yet all those provinces have long since acquiesced

in a foreign rule; they have cast in their lot with an alien race; they have found in the freedom, in the security, in the greatness of another community advantages that more than compensate them for the loss of national name and association with a kindred race. The Ticinese, for instance, would rather be Republicans than Italians, and the Alsatians would rather belong to a compact Monarchy, as the French Empire, than to such a Babal of Principalities as the German Confederacy. Yet we find on the part of Italy no attempts at propagandism at Lugano, no wish to pick a quarrel with Switzerland for her Subalpine canton. For her own part, Germany also knows better than to pick a quarrel with France for those Transrhenan provinces which her own divisions tore from her bosom. She finds it safer to lay claim to what never belonged to her, because she has to deal with an enemy with whom might is to be instead of right. Before 1848, not only Danish Schleswig, but even German Holstein, never evinced the slightest inclination to go asunder from Denmark. Left to themselves, those two Duchies would have been as contented with, as proud of, their lot as Alsatia or Ticino. Withdraw the Austro-Prussians even at the present moment, hush up a score or two of crack-brained demagogues, and Denmark, I will venture to say, will come to terms with her subjects with

as much ease and satisfaction to all parties as if no breach had ever occurred. This is not exactly the case with really oppressed or naturally irreconcilable nationalities. Germany has had her foot upon Italy, more or less, ever since the days of the first Otho, and the only fraction that is submitted to German sway is still fretting and writhing under it as if the invasion were only an affair of yesterday. If Austria, who, in an evil moment for herself, has had a finger in this Schleswig-Holstein pie, has any wish to erect herself into a champion of oppressed nationality, let her try the experiment of popular suffrage in Venetia; and, for that purpose, let her not wait till Italian armies and national committees and Garibaldi and Mazzini have the free run of the country. Let the appeal be made to the nation with the very cannon upon their walls and the bayonets at their breasts. Let the vote be taken even in Mantua, with the garrison frowning upon the defenceless population, and we shall see the result. The problem of nationality will then receive a very clear and decisive, an instructive and edifying solution.

After all the endless trouble the statesmen of the London Conference have undergone to patch up an armistice of truce between the belligerent

Powers, we must not be surprised if we hear that all their labour has been in vain, and that hostilities will break out again before the expiration of the term appointed for their suspension. Ever since we received the first announcement of the resolution of the diplomatists assembled in London, and up to Saturday last, the 14th, the Prussians have continued to carry on the wholesale spoliation which had signalized their presence in the Jutland provinces, and which had raised against them so universal a feeling of indignation throughout Europe. Their contributions are still laid upon and levied from most of the townships, and where the municipal authorities, referring to the terms of the London agreement (according to which 'la Prusse et l'Autriche s'obligent pendant la suspension des hostilités à ne point lever des contributions de guerre') refuse to comply with the spoilers' demands, the soldiers are allowed, and even directed, to help themselves to anything they can find in the shops or at the farmhouses, in not unfrequent instances breaking into the stores by main force, like common burglars. In some places, it is true, acknowledgments and quittances are delivered to the persons thus robbed, with assurances that the bonds 'shall be honoured at the end of the war.' But, again, there are cases in which the local authorities, upon remonstrating against the fla-

grant breach of the agreement and abuse of power have been threatened with instant imprisonment. There is no doubt, also, that the other condition, that the allied armies should not 'entraver le commerce, ni les communications, ni la marche régulière de l'administration,' has been utterly disregarded. The Austrians have even confiscated the wires and other gear belonging to the telegraph establishment; and in some localities they have prevented the citizens from hoisting their national and Royal flag, the Dannebrog; and be it borne in mind that the Germans, besides helping themselves to what they had immediate occasion for, or had taken a fancy to, have also laid under sequestration such property and merchandise as might be of use to them at some future period, by closing the shops and putting their seals to the doors, thus claiming eventual rights of possession, and preventing the owners from doing as they please with their goods.

It is remarkable, also, that the behaviour of the allied troops since the announcement of the truce has not been everywhere exactly the same, for while Marshal Wrangel, at his head-quarters in Horsens, has shown some disposition to spare the inhabitants and respect the conditions imposed by the London Conference, some of his subalterns, away from his immediate influence, have set no limits to their rapacity, and aggravated their

spoliations by the harshness and brutality of their behaviour. One of the officers who has risen to greater distinction by these acts of lawless depredation is General Count Vogel von Falkenstein, who has made himself famous at Aarhuus and throughout Jutland under the name of 'Der Raubvogel.'

This bird of prey, whose conduct can hardly be excused on any other ground than that of stark madness, on the 12th, at Aarhuus, grounding his demand on the terms of the truce, thus sets down the treatment that the officers are to expect from the hosts upon whom they are billeted:— For breakfast, coffee with accessories; for dinner, soup, meat, and vegetables, roast, and sweets, butter and cheese, and a bottle of wine; for supper, tea, bread and butter, and meat; also eight cigars daily. The men are to have, in the morning, coffee with accessories or brandy; at noon, a pound of meat, with vegetables, bread and cheese, a flask of beer, one-eighth of a pound of tobacco, or ten cigars, daily. The horses must be supplied daily with four measures of oats, eight pounds of hay, and the necessary straw. All this arrangement is to take effect on the 14th. Those hosts who have not or cannot otherwise procure the wine, tobacco, and cigars required for their billeted guests may apply for them at the Royal Prussian Commissariat. The same as

to forage. Where the Commissariat is not ready with the required forage, application should be made by them to the civil authorities, who are to deliver it upon acknowledgment and quittance.

Not a word is said about payment in this order, which was also published at Viborg and other places. We hear, however, twenty Danish skillings (5*d.* sterling) will be allowed to the inhabitants daily for every private soldier billeted upon them. About the officer no statement is made, and it is only added that General Falkenstein verbally insisted that 'the wine and cigars should be of the best quality.'

Be it remembered that the Danish Government, when compelled to quarter its own troops upon the people, paid one mark (4*d.*) per head for the soldiers, for which the latter were to have merely straw to lie upon, and one meal such as the family could afford for themselves, without either coffee, liquors, or tobacco, and the officers were only entitled, upon the same payment of a mark, to lodgings, fire, and light, and the use of the kitchen.

It matters not how sumptuously and splendidly the Prussian Government may choose to treat both men and officers so long as they are at its own charge; nor is it worth while to inquire whether these German troops at any time, at home or abroad, were allowed one pound of meat

daily and ten cigars. The question is whether their army is to be quartered and fed at the cost of the Jutlanders, or whether the latter are to receive the value at least of the provisions consumed in their houses. The Prussians and Austrians are not, agreeably to the terms of the truce, to '*lever des contributions de guerre*,' and are to '*payer tout ce qui serait fourni aux troupes Allemandes.*' Are we to understand that they insist upon the right of *einquartierung*, and that the billet implies the feeding no less than the accommodation of the troops? More, that under the designation of 'feeding' are to be included a waste and luxury such as were never known since a penny was set down as the proper wages for a soldier?

The proclamations of the generals, be it well borne in mind, eschew all mention of payment. That fivepence per day will be allowed for each soldier is what I hear from various quarters, but I have no means to test the correctness of the intelligence; and it is also only on common report the assertion rests, that whenever and wherever the Jutlanders apply for payment the answer invariably is that they are to receive no cash, but mere quittances, and obligations or bonds only payable at the end of the war.

This merely as to the general features of the case. I spare you endless particulars as to the

threat of imprisonment 'on bread and water,' held out by General Bornstedt at Viborg, against the magistrates who, upon the strength of the armistice, refused to supply him with provisions without payment; as to the frequent actual arrest of the Danish officials guilty of no other crime than the discharge of their duty in a country which, by the terms of the armistice, was to be civilly administered by them; as to the sequestration of shops and stores, with seals and locks, continued even after the conclusion of the truce, &c. &c. Nothing would be easier than to accumulate a sufficient amount of evidence to prove either that the Austro-Prussian Governments are not willing to abide by the terms of the armistice, and to observe their own share of the obligations devolving upon them, or that the discipline of their armies is not strong and thorough enough to bind their commanders to their duties. With the ample means of communication placed at their disposal, and the excellent management for which the German commissariat is justly renowned, it would be worse than idle to plead the necessities of their troops as an excuse for the excesses of which they have made themselves guilty. The Austro-Prussians have no occasion, as they certainly have no right, to live at free quarters in Jutland; nor do they now, nor did they at any time, pretend to justify their spoliations by alleg-

ing imperative wants; for, indeed, as I before stated, they lay hold by anticipation of what they may feel inclined to take possession of at some future opportunity. The only pretext alleged is, that they wish to secure for themselves indemnity for the value of the vessels captured by the Danes at sea; and as the blockade has now been raised, and the question of that indemnity will, with many others, come before the Conference for deliberation, it is clear that even the shadow of an excuse for their marauding outrages, if it ever existed, has been now most unquestionably removed.

May it not be that there are plan and method in all this wanton abuse of power, and that the Germans, anxious to withdraw the settlement of the Danish question from the hands of neutral negotiators, are trying to push the Danes to extremities, so as to bring about a fresh outbreak of hostilities, to frustrate the endeavours of the Powers interested in the restoration and preservation of European peace, and to have their weak and more than half-vanquished enemy utterly at their mercy and discretion? The conduct of the German troops would certainly go far to justify this surmise; and I am not at all surprised to hear the organs of public opinion in this country declaring that the armistice is nothing but a delusion and a snare, and advising that

hostilities should be immediately recommenced and an indemnity sought for the German depredations by land, by renewing the blockade at sea of some of the German ports, naming, as the most desirable under the circumstances, Stettin.

Outrageous as the report of all these Austro-Prussian doings may sound, I am not unwilling to admit that the conduct of the Allies is but too much in keeping with the usual practices of warfare on the Continent. It is the contrast between the Danes' own behaviour and that of their enemies that sets the outrages of these latter in the most monstrous light. I was in Holstein and Schleswig previous to the outbreak of hostilities, and there was no end to the complaints of the disaffected part of the population with respect to the requisitions in straw, lard, and other provisions made by the Government, only upon most urgent necessity. But no attempt was ever made to deny that everything thus taken was not instantly paid in cash; and the only imposition that was practised upon me was on the part of those who contended that the payments were made in paper—a flagrant equivocation, since the 'paper' consisted in Danish bank-notes, which had then and still have as safe a circulation as the purest gold.

In the same manner, when at the Dannewerk, on the Schlei, at Dybböl, or Fredericia, gigantic earthworks were to be undertaken, the too loyal Government was never known to trespass on the liberties of the people. It worked its own soldiers till they were unable to stand, but never pressed the common country labourers into an employment for which they were eminently fitted. They hardly ever used the peasant at all —never, most certainly, on compulsion or without remuneration. Yet Denmark was waging a defensive war—a war for the very life and honour of the country, and upon those too slowly and imperfectly rising fortifications rested all hope for a successful resistance to overwhelming numbers. The Austrians in Jutland are the aggressors; they are the stronger, they have overcome all opposition, yet they overrun the land like robbers. They levy contributions to feed an army which is in close contact with an inexhausted basis of supplies; they take hostages, scare away families, terrorize the people by the threat of military executions; they rob and pillage the shops in at least four towns, and compel 2,000 countrymen to lend a hand at the demolition of the forts of Fredericia,—a wanton destruction, perfectly unnecessary for the safety of their position, utterly inefficient to secure their hold upon the country. It

is the gratuitous rather than the atrocious character of such deeds that shocks the single-minded Danes. They can scarcely believe of others what they would never think of doing themselves. To tear off the boots of a man when he is dead, even to snatch the rings from his fingers, or knock off his fingers for the sake of his rings, when he has ceased to suffer, may seem a very venial offence. Stripping a fallen enemy of his garments was the almost hallowed practice of Homeric heroes. But the Dane could not bring himself to do it, and he cannot conceive why his dead officers should not have been returned untouched into their friends' hands, when the Prussian and Austrian dead were invariably treated with so much reverence by the Danes themselves. Have I not seen mere private soldiers in Prussian uniform, laid in decent coffins by the side of their fallen enemies —enemies now no longer—and laid in the same grave, with the same honours, by their side? Truly the Danes, with their notions of right and wrong, their respect for property and individual freedom, and their veneration for the relics of mortality, are in advance of their age. No wonder if they meet with little reciprocity at their neighbours' hands, no wonder if they suffer for their over-goodness. The world has no patience with it. One more case of atrocious abuse of

power I have to add, and am all the more anxious to give it publicity, as I rather think it has escaped the vigilance of the Danish papers themselves, and as it seemed to myself so incredible, that I was loth to let it drop from my pen till I had such evidence about it as left no doubt in my mind as to the authenticity of the anecdote.

An Austrian superior officer stationed in Aarhuus had asked one of the citizens of that place to supply him with a carriage and a pair of horses to drive him to a place distant two Danish miles (8½ English). At the appointed time the man appeared, but with a one-horse chaise, alleging the impossibility of finding another horse in the town. He was bidden to get the second horse, with a threat to harness him—the man himself—to the chaise, in case of non-compliance. The man continued firm in his denial, and allowed himself actually to be put to by the side of his one horse, and was thus driven the whole distance, to the unspeakable surprise and disgust of his townspeople. The single-minded man submitted to the indignity without any attempt at resistance, and upon being released he travelled over to Copenhagen and presented himself to the King at Bernstorft, thinking in his native simplicity that it was in the power of his Royal Master to obtain him redress. I saw the man myself, and there was not one person at the Court

that entertained the faintest doubt as to the truthfulness of his plain and consistent tale.

I do not know if even such atrocities may be deemed by the reader comparatively trifling matters. Perhaps they may pass for practical jokes in the very worst possible taste; but they seem to me to evince on the part of the Prussian military authorities, a determination to overstep the limits of the power assigned to them by the terms of the armistice, as if in contempt of the Plenipotentiaries who drew up that improvident convention. Be it borne in mind that the Jutlanders complain but little, if at all, of the behaviour of the common soldiers quartered among them. Both Prussians and Austrians, but more especially the latter, show themselves well-disciplined, civilized beings. Ill-usage is, in this case, the deliberate act of the superior officers, who, probably, only follow up the instructions received from their Government. The fact is, the Prussians can realize the stunning fact that their troops have, after half-a-century of inglorious leisure, at last achieved a victory (and what a victory!), and they take a certain pleasure, and gratify a miserable pride, in aggravating their yoke and riding roughshod over the defenceless Jutlanders. The latter keep up a bold

countenance, and, it cannot be denied, contrive to put the patience of their hated invaders to the severest test. It is a war between the gadfly and the lion, a contest in which the latter loses as much of his dignity as the former exposes himself to rebuke and chastisement.

The demeanour of the Jutlanders under such trying circumstances doubtless entitles them to take rank among the most stiff-necked, no less than most loyal, subjects of the Danish Crown. We read daily in the papers here addresses from the municipal corporations, and from popular meetings of the various towns and communities of the Peninsula, urging the King's Government to stand fast upon the rights of the common Fatherland, and to run all the risks of a new outbreak of hostilities, rather than consent to the dismemberment of the Monarchy, declaring that, for its own part, Jutland is ready to put up with all the hardships of prolonged occupation, and to undergo twenty times the sacrifices it has already been made to bear. The Jutlanders are, like eels, getting used to being skinned, and they flatter themselves that the invaders have seized upon all that was worth taking, and that they have henceforth but little to fear from further spoliation.

There is no doubt that both the Danish Government and the people of Fünen and Zealand will come to the help of their Jutland brethren by

all the means in their power. The humanity of the Danish people is one of the most pleasing features in their character, and it has been shown conspicuously in their efforts to relieve the sufferings of their sick and wounded soldiers. Jacobsen, a brewer in this city, has already contributed in various instalments 9,000 rigsdalers (more than £1,000) to the fund for the widows of officers and soldiers killed in battle. Treskov, another burgher, allows a pension for life of 100 rigsdalers to twenty widows. These praiseworthy examples have been followed by several other citizens. On the whole, I have reason to believe that Copenhagen has taxed herself to the amount of more than half-a-million sterling for the relief of the wounded and for the support of the widows and orphans of men fallen in this war.

It is well that England, who is no less generous and freehanded in similar emergencies, should know how strong a resemblance the Dane bears on this, as on so many other points, to her own national character.

CHAPTER IX.

SERENE DAYS.

Constitution-Day at Copenhagen.—Dyr-have.—The King and Queen.—Holiday-making.—Fredericksberg and Tivoli.—The Dannebrog.—Opening of the Copenhagen and Elsinore Railway.—Danish and English Sailors.—Railway-opening in Denmark and Italy.—A Railway Banquet.—Royal Speech-making.—Sea-bathing in Denmark.—The Sound.—Marienlyst.—Danish Lodging-houses.—Elsinore.

June 5–11.

COPENHAGEN had yesterday her own *Grundlovfest*, or Constitution-day, and a very happy town it was made by it, from early morning till two o'clock after midnight. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that not one soul was left in the city. The day seemed to be made to order; the brightest and most joyous that could be had in any climate. Spring is in full tide at last, even in Denmark, and all the trees, with the exception of the sleepy oak, are out in full blossom. It was a sin and a shame to be indoors; so out we sallied with the crowd, happy to follow wherever anybody might lead.

The 5th of June has been set apart for the anniversary of the happy day in which the King of Denmark abdicated part of his Sovereign power in behalf of his people, and trusted them with the cares and responsibilities of self-government. The granting of a Constitution was here an auspicious event, unattended by scenes of riot and violence, the mere acknowledgment of the coming of age of a nation long since ripened for free institutions. As emancipation was free from civil strife, so is the commémoration of it unclouded by ominous remembrances, and the joy it inspires unalloyed by evil apprehensions. In former years, the festival was held in the capital, or in some spot in its immediate environs. By way of innovation, this time, and to give it a more than ordinary interest, choice is made of the darling playground of the Copenhageners, the Deer Park, or Dyr-have.

I shall waste no ink in the description of the drive to that favourite haunt, past the pleasure-grounds of Charlotten-lund, the watering-place of Klangenborg, the Hôtel Bellevue, and other spots mentioned on a former occasion. I beg to carry the reader at once into the very middle of the Park, close to the Royal Slot, pavilion, or hunting-lodge of the Hermitagé—*Eremitage*—also described, where, in the afternoon, between three and four o'clock, the vast assemblage of citizens

who have been hitherto (primitively early people!) scattered about reclining under the trees, and consuming their pic-nic lunch or dinner, are now coming together from every quarter of the vast forest-ground. A throng of about 20,000 persons are pressing upon each other on tiptoe within a compass of two or three square miles round the palace, creeping under, vaulting over, breaking through the long line of carriages, private or public, that were packed together, as they are at Epsom at the ropes, round the Royal Lodge—a building which, notwithstanding the different uses to which it is put, bears in its shape no little resemblance to one of the great English race-stands.

Just about four o'clock, a wave-like commotion seemed to stir the surface of that dense multitude; cheers rent the air, a lively strain of martial music rose above the din of voices, and presently a string of modest court-carriages, with scarlet liveries, and drawn by a single span of horses each, drove up to the doors of the Lodge. A gentleman and lady in mourning attire alighted from the first carriage; a young lady and a boy six years old from the second; a number of gentlemen from the following ones. The former couple stopped on the threshold, and acknowledged by bows the applause of the shouting masses. They then went in, and were lost to

view for a few minutes. What occurred within the walls of the Pavilion, we, the outsiders, of course, could only guess. A deputation from the corporations of the capital and of the adjoining townships made, we were led to suppose, their salaam to their Sovereign, who, no doubt, answered in 'terse and appropriate language.' In the meanwhile, those of us who had ears and voices joined in the execution of a song—'Til Kongen'—written and composed for the occasion, and handed round in a tiny book. As the last notes were swelling in the air, the central window was thrown open, and the subject of those few lines and his Queen appeared on the balcony. The cheers now rose to the highest pitch; the Royal couple expressed their thanks by benignant inclinations of their heads.

The tumult was then hushed up, and from the midst of the deep silence a clear ringing voice—the King's voice—was heard, each word as distinctly audible to every man as to everyone the throb of his own heart thrilled with breathless emotion.

The King's words were few. He gave utterance to his gratitude for the affection so loudly testified by his subjects, and begged them to join him in his prayer for 'a blessing on Denmark.' ('Gud bevare Danmark!') The short speech ended with another bow, upon which the Royal

personages withdrew. Cheers were then given for the Queen, who once more came out, and bowed her thanks. A new song struck up 'For Danmark!' but was interrupted by the appearance of a young fair head just peeping out above the balustrade of the balcony. There was a shout for Prince Waldemar, whose head instantly ducked under, terrified by its own rashness. The little *espiégle* was, however, brought back by his fond parents, and made to do obeisance, to the intense delight of the by-standers. There were more songs for 'Constitution,' for 'Army and Navy,' for 'Norden,' *i. e.* for the great Scandinavian Fatherland, and so on through the book.

A rush to the marble stairs leading to the Palace then ensued, and from the midst of the thronged multitude the Royal party made their way back to the carriages, and were soon out of sight, on their road to the Castle of Bernstorff, his Majesty's chosen country residence for the summer, a few miles off. There was not one soldier on duty on the grounds or at the palace-gates; not one policeman: the people knew how to make room for their beloved Monarch, and needed no marshalling, no let or hindrance.

The whole scene was simple in the extreme, and impressive from its simplicity.

There is something to me unspeakably touching in the sight of that young, modest, affectionate, royal couple, who have come to the throne at an epoch of so much trial and peril for the Danish Monarchy, and who take as little of the pomp and pageantry of their new station upon themselves, as if they sighed for the domestic bliss on which the cares of a tempest-tossed State have so rudely trespassed. The King preserves in the midst of his newly-accrued greatness, all the easy grace, the courteous simplicity, which belong to a thoroughbred private gentleman. It would be waste of breath to say of the Queen that she is 'every inch a lady.' Old enough to be a grandmother, she preserves yet all the freshness of matronly beauty: a melancholy beauty, you would say, in its happiest moments. Look at her photographs, and see if that row of diamond *aigrettes* round her head do not give you the impression of a crown of thorns. There is in both the fine handsome countenances of this Royal pair a look of anxious care, a touch of sadness, conveying very plain hints of the share both of them take in the sorrows and fears by which the country is distracted, and making irresistible appeal to the sympathies of all beholders. Observe, that I judge of them by mere eyesight and as one of the crowd; for I have not sued for the honour of a presentation at Court. The King,

I am told, has made immense strides towards the best-grounded popularity a Sovereign should aspire to win among his people—a popularity grounded on a firm faith in the uprightness of his intentions, and on the acknowledgment of his sterling public and private virtues. Of course, there are dissenters from this favourable opinion: an Eider-Danish gentleman stood by my side as the King spoke, who found fault with him for 'avoiding all allusions to present circumstances.' But I happened to entertain different views on the subject, and thought the King quite right in not holding his Council of State in the open air, and taking 20,000 people—men, women, and children—into the deliberation.

There is not an instance of a familiar face amongst the old acquaintance of the Royal pair in private life, whose presence is forgotten, or even not expressly solicited; no instance of a stranger with any pretensions to gentle manners who is not welcomed in this unassuming household, irrespective of courtly or diplomatic etiquette. English visitors, especially, easily find themselves at home in a Court bound to their own reigning House by such near ties, and where their own language is as readily spoken as at Marlborough House.

When the King had left the grounds, a party of patriotic gentlemen stepped upon a platform, and delivered set speeches, of which the songs above alluded to supplied the themes. I did not wait to hear the last of them, you may be sure, for greater attraction was exercised upon me by the People's Fair, which was held in another part of the Park, where there were whirligigs, swinging-boats, shooting-matches, trials of strength, and a variety of other open-air exercises, of which these good Danish citizens seem to be inordinately fond. There is no race in the world so ready to make themselves 'like unto children,' as these Scandinavians, unless it be their neighbours—once friends and now enemies—the people of North Germany.

After sauntering from booth to booth, I drove back to town, and proceeded to Fredericksberg, a park or vast garden, where the same pleasures, and those of eating and drinking, were carried on on a large scale, and where the great treat was to be—please the everlasting summer-day of this high latitude ever to come to a close—a magnificent display of fireworks. From Fredericksberg we went to Tivoli, that Copenhagen paradise, about the delights of which my expectation was for so long a time kept at so great a stretch. Tivoli is a Vauxhall or Cremorne all over, with music and ballets, wine and beer, dancing on the

green, Montagnes Russes, balloons, and fireworks. Only the people here do not happen to tire to-morrow of what they delight in to-day. Everybody goes to Tivoli, and the presence of the respectable scares away the disreputable. The great enjoyment at Tivoli this day was a show of oil and gas lamps, which put to shame the never-waning twilight. I do not know whether the crowd was larger at Dyr-have, or at Frederiksberg, or at the Tivoli Gardens. My impression is that people must have multiplied themselves so as to be, like Irish birds, at the three places at the same time.

The Danes were not allowed to keep holy their Constitution-day in all places as they did at Copenhagen. At Aalborg, Ronders, and other towns in Jutland, the Prussians would not suffer the national flag to be used by the citizens, and what would be a national anniversary without a goodly show of colours? Without it—the Dannebrog!—their dear old banner—fallen from Heaven! We made up for any deficiency, you may be sure, by as fine a display of Red-and-White as ever could be seen, both here in town, at Dyrhave, and wherever there was a gathering of holiday-makers.

We had again a day of merry-making this day, June 8th, *i.e.* the King, and I, and other persons, opened the new railway-line which has just been completed between Copenhagen and Elsinore. The distance as the crow flies is not much more than twenty English miles; but they made the railway more than one-third longer, (eight Danish, equal to thirty-six English miles), by going round to Fredericksberg and Fredensborg; so that the fastest trains will not get over the ground any quicker than the time now employed by the steamers plying from port to port. Speed of locomotion and the time gained by it, are, however, no object with these good but sluggish Danes, and they think little of the loss of an hour in a line of first-rate European importance. This line is to join the Swedish railway at Helsingborg, across the Sound, the train being carried over the three miles of water by one of those ferries on the American plan, constructed for the purpose. By the means of three such ferries, and by the railways either already in operation or in progress of construction, a communication will thus be established, not only between Stockholm and Copenhagen, but also between this latter place and Körsor, from Körsor to Nyeborg; hence to Middlefart; from Middlefart to Sugghöi, in Jutland, and all across Schleswig and Holstein to Hamburg; thus enabling a

traveller to have himself conveyed in the same carriage over Zealand and Fünen, and across the Oresund, the Great and Little Belts, all the way from either of the two Northern capitals to the great German Free City, and the rest of the world.

We were all assembled at the terminus (Clampenborg station, Vesterbro), in Copenhagen, at half-past eleven. The King was there, the Queen, the Crown-Prince, the Princess Dagmar, and about two hundred persons, Cabinet Ministers, Civil, Military, and Naval Officers, Courtiers, Railway Directors, and other Citizens. Most of the people in uniforms; almost all with stars and crosses, cordons and keys, a goodly display of the world's vanities, dear to Danish as to other human hearts, all glittering in the sun of one of what the English people would call the 'Queen's days,' the weather being as propitious to the movements of Royalty in Denmark as it is proverbially in Great Britain.

The district travelled over by this short line may be called the garden of Zealand; it is a blessed land, equally good to live and look upon. Four or five of the greatest Royal parks stretch in sight of the line to the right and left—Charlotten-lund, Dyr-have, Sorgenfri, Fredericksdal,

&c.; sweeps of the richest meadow-land, and masses of the thickest forest verdure, swell about far and wide wherever the eye turns. It is English landscape in its happiest mood, with the additional peculiarity of broad sheets of water here and there; the mirror ever ready wherever there is beauty to rejoice in its reflection.

At most of the stations the train stopped, as I said; here the local authorities stepped up to the King's carriage as it slackened speed; there the King himself and his suite and all of us alighted, and there was interchange of obeisance, congratulations, and good wishes. The whole population of the neighbourhood, as a matter of course, crowded together at these halting-places—a well-dressed, good-looking, well-behaving *Danish* multitude. The King stepped down not merely in front of them, but among them—into them—the King and the Queen, and the Crown-Prince—a rather tall, handsome, young gentleman, in the uniform of a field-officer of the infantry of the line,—and that lovely Princess Dagmar, so young and modest and ingenuous, looking evidently happy with the gaiety and the novelty of the scene, as were also her parents, for the reception they met with everywhere was so hearty and genuine as to dispel even the cloud of care so habitually set on the noble brow of the Queen. Truly this is a good-looking family, and I am sure the impression they

made this day upon thousands of their subjects, to whom their faces were as yet unfamiliar, was that no kingly race ever better became their station than this 'newly-arrived' House, who seem to take so little of the greatness of Royalty upon themselves. Not the King only, but the Queen, the Prince, and even the darling young Princess mixed singly with the crowd, and had a word to say to all who were not too shy to approach them. No wonder the arrival and departure of the train were the signals for the loudest shouts of the delighted assemblage. At Fredericksborg, especially, the scene was extremely animated; dense throngs of ladies, in the gayest attire, filled up all open spaces and spread widely over the avenues, their handkerchiefs waving in the air, beautifully contrasting with the variety of their rainbow dresses and pink parasols. They looked like an animated Dannebrog—all red-and-white. Those dear national colours, floating above the buildings, absorbed all other hues displayed by the motley multitude.

An affecting scene awaited us as we burst in sight of the Sound just upon nearing Elsinore. The train came to a standstill on an elevated position near the shore, and drawn up in a line before us we saw about a dozen of the men-of-war of the

Baltic fleet, from every one of which the cannon gave its thunder of welcome to the King. On the land side, along the road, were most of the crews of those ships in their clean blue shirts, presenting arms; their trumpets, rather more in tune than the bugles of the land troops, struck up the noble strain, 'Kong Christian stod ved höien Mast'—a strain that went through the nerves of most by-standers, and thrilled them with some of those emotions which come upon us when we are least in quest of them.

It was impossible to look at those fair, weather-beaten mariners, as we went past the long row of faces, without feeling convinced that one stood in presence of a goodly array of English tars. The look, the shape, the bearing of the men are identical. The very sound of the language displays the greatest affinity. There were men, as I believe I already stated, in the Danish army at Sönderborg who used to startle me as I heard them talking among themselves, because I actually thought that their idiom was not only like English, but actually English. This is especially the case, I am told, with some of the people of West Jutland and Schleswig, whose dialects are not altogether unintelligible when they come ashore in some of the English northern counties, or in the Scottish lowlands. Truly a closer kinship than exists between Great Britain and Denmark is

nowhere to be found on earth; and it seems hard, indeed, that the bigger sister should not raise as much as a little finger in behalf of the younger one, to save her from the two great bullies who have almost beaten the soul out of her body.

Presently we all set foot on Elsinore, and the King and suite proceeded in carriages to the shore of the Sound, where they alighted in sight of the Kronborg, and of the Swedish coast, the King standing on a high spot near the shore and pointing out the most salient objects to the Queen, who seemed to be a stranger in these parts, and was delighted with what she saw. There was then a backward move, and all joined again at the Skyte-bane, or shooting-gallery, a large building and grounds near the station belonging to the rifle club of the town, where the feast was spread.

I happen to have been more than once present at the opening of railways by the King of Italy, and I was particularly struck with the difference with which the same solemnity can be gone through in different countries. In Italy the road from Bologna to Ancona, or from the latter place to Pescara, traverses classic ground, and the names of Faenza, Rimini, Pesaro, &c., make a fair

different impression on the ear from those of Hellerup, Emdrup, Birkerod, Hillerod, Lillerod, &c., which no man has ever heard out of Denmark, and with which the Dane himself has no great traditions to associate. Moreover, the Italians are a loud, demonstrative people; art and taste come natural to them in the decoration of their festivals. Those provinces, besides, were newly rescued from the most crushing tyranny; the locomotive was as new to them as the King who had lately annexed them, the fellow-subjects who were coming to greet them, and the glad tidings of freedom and civilization that came in their train. The opening of a railway under such circumstances in Italy was a political event, a peaceful revolution. Here, in Denmark, the railway comes as the last link of a long chain of gradual social progress. It delights all, but surprises nobody. The people go out to welcome the train as a matter of common occurrence—a familiar object, which, if they have not seen here, they have seen a score of miles off. They are glad of a holiday —glad of an opportunity for the display of loyal feelings to their Sovereign. That Sovereign is no stranger to them; he comes to the throne as the heir of a long-established dynasty in the regular course of succession. For the rest, they think little of arches, tapestries on the walls, and damask cloths from the windows; they bring themselves,

and their honest, bright faces, and their lusty cheers. That must make joy enough for the new comers and for themselves. Anything theatrical would be out of the question; anything even artistical would be out of keeping with the prosaic iron rails.

On one point, however, the Danes have exhibited a most decided superiority over the Italians, and that is the dinner. At Ancona or Pescara four or five hundred starving men, standing round ill-provided tables, with hat in hand and cloak on arm, had to snatch such morsels as they could get at, wrangling and almost squabbling. In Denmark we sat about 200 in one room, seated round four longitudinal tables and a tranverse one, and before us were laid about twelve dishes, handed round in as many courses, with every variety of French, German, and Peninsular wines. The dinner was a good thing; but the leisure, cordiality, and actual brotherhood with which we ate it were even better. The King sat in the middle of the high table, having his Queen on his left, the young Princess Dagmar on his right, who was supported on the other side by her brother, the Crown Prince. Round the same table were the Ministers, some of the great Court dignitaries, and the directors of the new railway, the hosts of the day.

One of these latter, a Herr David, stood up,

just as we had despatched our 'roast veal with green peas and olive sauce,'—*i. e.* when we were through about one-fourth of the dinner, and, as he stood face to face with the King, the table only intervening, he, in a short neat speech, proposed the 'Health of the King.' The band struck up 'King Christian stood by the lofty Mast;' the cannon thundered outside. The toast was received with real enthusiasm, and the King actually 'jingled glasses' with Herr David. He then thanked the assembled guests with an easy flow of language and some happy allusion to the 'bark of the State that would yet be got safely out of the stormy sea,' which elicited new applause. The same indefatigable Herr David next proposed 'The Queen,' for whom the King made an appropriate answer. The turn next came for Prince Frederick, the Crown Prince, and his sister Dagmar, when the former got up and acquitted himself of his task with a readiness and *aplomb* quite beyond his years. The King did not forget 'The Army and Navy,' which toast was drunk amid the strains of 'Den tappre Landsoldat' and 'Holmens faste Stock.' The absent were not defrauded of their share, especially King George of Greece, who, no doubt, would have been glad enough to be with us—glad to be anywhere, perhaps, rather than where he is. Bishop Monrad also proposed 'The Princess of Wales,' who

might almost have heard the hurrah which rose in her honour all the way from the shores of the Oresund to her boudoir at Marlborough House. The King assured the bystanders that 'his absent daughter felt as poignantly for the calamities of her country as any there present.' After one more toast, for the 'good old city of Elsinore,' the King and suite left the table. We rose in a hurry and followed into the garden, whence, after a hasty cup of coffee, 199 of the company took their seats in the carriages back to Copenhagen, and only one—your own correspondent, looked out for night-quarters at Elsinore, where to describe what he had seen.

Those fidgetty English tourists, who do not know what to do with themselves at this season, can do no better than come and spend their summer months and spare cash on the Oresund. There can hardly be a greater pleasure in these bright days, which begin to be deliciously warm even in Denmark, than to steam up and down the Sound by the 'Horatio,' 'Ophelia,' or 'Hamlet.' Those three little steamers ply between the two coasts from Malmö to Copenhagen, and hence to Elsinore and Helsingford, morning and evening. The shores on either side are somewhat tame and lowly, and will not bear comparison with the

rugged sublimity of some of the great Mediterranean straits. But the scenery has a charming homeliness of its own, nevertheless. The two countries, politically sundered for so many centuries, woo each other most tenderly, and as you approach Elsinore the Danish and Swedish headlands overlap each other as if in loving embrace, and the beholder is at a loss to tell where his eye rests on a 'Scanian and where on a Zealandian landscape. The vegetation on either side is luxuriant beyond belief, and the magnificent timber spreads its drooping branches down to the very surface of the tideless waves. The Lake of Geneva, where it contracts itself into the narrow channel of the Rhone, has scarcely purer waters than are to be seen in these ever-flowing currents; and nowhere is the sight of white, glittering sails more animated and enlivening than in this silent highway of the Baltic. The steamers that waft you along are clean and comfortable, the traffic is carried on with all speed and in the best order, and the company getting in and out at every station is the best looking, most interesting, and sociable you may wish to travel with. I am sure only to see the rosy cheeks and golden hair of the hundreds of well-dressed Danish girls on their way to and fro the different watering-places on the Sound is a treat well repaying any trouble it may cost a Londoner to come all the way from

his dingy Thames, and from the coal-begrimed wharfs of Gravesend-reach.

Whatever cloud may rise on the political horizon of Denmark, the sky on the Oresund is, and has been for weeks, as bright as the brightest in the South. These Danes are a buoyant and sanguine race; in the very worst plight they hope for the best, and while the London Conference is disposing of them with prolonged armistice, schemes of partition or personal union, they seem only to think that summer and sea-bathing wait for no man. They live by the day, the twenty-hour solstitial day, and put off the cares of the future for that gloomy winter season which may be better fitted for sackcloth and ashes. This short spell of genial, warm weather is the Danish carnival. It is the season in which they indulge in those quiet, rational amusements which best become their sedate nature and the thorough civilization peculiar to them. Sea-bathing is with them the greatest luxury. The streets of Copenhagen are empty. The whole population, from the King to the humblest trader, are out for a dip.

Such watering-places as the Sound everywhere affords are not to be found in Great Britain, either on the German ocean or on the Atlantic coast. The influence of the Gulf Stream is not felt within this inland channel, and the water is

as deliciously ice-cold as the stoutest nerves can desire, the sands under feet as soft as velvet, free from all gravel and shingle, and the diver can be seen fathoms deep in the transparent element as distinct as if he were floating in air. Bathing-houses or machines are hardly needed. You just look out for the loneliest nook anywhere along shore; you step from the green sward into the rippling waves; you flounder in the water or bask in the sun on the grass with alternate enjoyment. Your whole being becomes as amphibious as the country itself, a country truly *meer-umschlungen*, where land and water blend with each other in the closest intimacy.

Who shall number the multitude, men, women, and children, who are sure, this blessed Sunday, to plunge from the margin of the Klampenborg strand, on the skirts of the gorgeously verdant Deer-park? From which of the hundreds of tidy villas along the Sound by Holbech, Uebeck, Humlebeck, &c., shall not the fair inmates issue forth in their long-flowing gowns, metamorphosing for a few minutes a nymph into a syren? From Copenhagen to Elsinore every village on the coast is a watering-place; every country-house is a bathing-house. Yet, if the whole Sound is a bathing establishment, no doubt Elsinore is

its capital. There is hardly anything in the world, I believe, that will bear comparison as a Bade-Anstalt with the Marienlyst, a short half-mile beyond the Queen of the Sound, just beyond the glacis of the Kronborg. From the glacis of old Hamlet's Castle there stretches along shore a wide, long meadow, smooth and green as a billiard table, so wonderfully level with the sea that you wonder by what invisible law it is held in obedience to the fiat that parted land from water at the beginning of the world. On your left, as you look up to the Cattegat, you have fine, swelling knolls, with such masses of green foliage as all the parks of Old England can scarcely match—masses of foliage so rife with blossoms at this period of the year that green can scarcely be described as the prevalent hue. In the midst of that foliage is a maze of winding, up-hill, down-hill walks, where, if you can get an Eve to wander with you, you may fancy yourself a very Adam in Eden; and here and there in the thickest bowers you come upon snug country seats, the flowery gardens of which seem to be cultivated no less for your especial enjoyment than for that of their fortunate owners. Every gate is invitingly open; every labourer at work has a smile and a greeting *God-dag* for you. The Danes are a people who know but little about fencing and paling; nothing about locked doors or barred

windows. Their privacy needs no other protection than the discretion of the passer-by. How they manage it I know not; but they seem to have no fear of tramps or pickpockets, and the noxious vermin somehow cannot flourish in the land. Living here is astonishingly cheap, and made more so by the fabulous honesty of every person you have to deal with. Look at the full round face of my landlady, the owner of the little clean, tidy, flowery cottage by the sea-shore at Lappen, where I am now ruralizing, and tell me if you can see in that good portly body any aptness for those petty tricks of imposition or downright theft, that make the harpies of Margate or Broadstairs, of Blackpool or Scarborough, so hateful to the honest Cockney repairing to the seashore for a 'sniff of the breeze.' What good Madame Funk is, all the dames of her sisterhood equally are. They are, most of them, sailors or fishermen's wives, well-to-do people, who seem to take in lodgers merely as amateurs and for company's sake. There is no instance of the slightest attempt at overcharge for a good many miles round the Marienlyst.

The Marienlyst, I must not forget to tell you, was only a few years ago a royal abode, and was made over by the late King to the good city of Elsinore, that the meanest of his subjects, or, indeed, the commonest mortal of any country could,

at but little expense, realize his fondest dream about "dwelling in marble halls.' The old Royal Pavilion, with its gardens and groves, is now the Kursaal, with dining, reading, and billiard rooms. Below, nearer the beach and the bathing barracks, is a hotel for those who prefer public to private accommodation. The place is or used to be, in peaceful times, frequented by Germans, who have imported here most of the habits, comforts, and luxuries of their spas — their sweet sauces, sour wines, Procrustean beds, and all, in fact, except their roulette and rouge-et-noir; for somehow the Danes are either of all people in world, the most proof against vice, or are the most consummate maskers in paying that homage that vice owes to virtue.

But I was forgetting the Elsinore meadow, its gorgeous landscape on the left hand, and the blue Sound on the right. The Sound on your right hand, as you look up towards the Cattegat, offers one of the liveliest sea-views the world can boast. The sails crowding upon its smooth surface may be counted by thousands rather than by hundreds; they glide along the narrow channel with incessant change, an endless entertainment to the idle watchers from the shore. It is a perfect swarm of fishing and other small craft; the whole nar-

row channel at certain hours is glittering white with them. The heavy steamer, now and then, comes puffing up, paddling her way through the thick of them, and almost scattering them to the right and left, making them bob and dance in her mighty wake. Occasionally, also, the towering man-of-war ploughs the waves through the throng of all that light-skimming small fry, a sight which becomes more common as you near Copenhagen, where part of the fleet now lies at anchor, by the side of a few disconsolate barks and brigs, the birch-broom at the top of whose masts proclaims them German prizes.

Beyond all that swarming hive of vessels, almost on a line with the water, lies the low Swedish coast, low but distinctly sketched on the line of the horizon, with its tiny white sandy cliffs, its towers and spires, its towns and villages scattered throughout its length; so distinct and so near, as you look at it from the lofty windows of the Marienlyst Kursaal, that the landscape on either shore blends together into one vast prospect, with the blue sheen of the Sound hardly breaking up the continuous sight of land, in smooth sheets of water mimicking here the little round bay—there the winding reach of a lake. Low and tame the coast lies along the Sound all the way from Malmö to Helsingborg, but as the strait widens into the open Cattegat the rugged

outlines of the Kullen tell you of hill and dale, of a landscape rising above the humble pretensions of these Danish and Scanian regions, and giving you a foretaste of the distant, mountainous glories of North Sweden and Norway.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

The Conference.—Proposed Partition of Schleswig.—Political and Financial Consequences of such a Scheme.—European Complications.—German Tendencies.—Dano-German Affinities.—Parties in Denmark.—Denmark a Member of the Bund.—The Eider Canal.—Its Probable Use in the Hands of Germany.—Of Denmark and England.—English and Danish Interests.—Probable Results of the London Conference.—Hopes of the Danes.—Contemplated Resumption of Hostilities.—Its Consequences.

June 12-15.

I HAVE hesitated for several days about making my few remaining pages ready for the press, because I hoped the London Conference would come to the end of its labours ere the time stipulated for the accomplishment of my own task. The historian has, however, in this instance, outstripped the diplomatist, and I must close my narrative of the invasion of Denmark, without knowing whether the tale has an end as well as a beginning, or whether my last chapter only drops the curtain on the first act of a drama, of which time and events are to work out the *dé-*

nouement at a distant period. Up to this moment the London Conference has achieved nothing, and all that remains for me to do is to throw out some conjectures as to the probable results of its final proceedings.

News has just reached us from London which throws not a little dismay and gloom among the people of Copenhagen. It can hardly be believed here that the proposed abandonment of the Treaties of 1852, and the scheme for a partition of Schleswig, could be spontaneously mooted in the Conference by the plenipotentiaries of the neutral Powers, England and France. The Danes were aware that they had to contend against irresistible forces, and, if left to themselves, they knew that they must make up their minds to a partial or total ruin. But they hardly expected that the dismemberment of their Monarchy should be made the theme of cool deliberation in a council of diplomatists, most of whom were parties to the late political arrangements, and all of whom have a vital interest in the preservation of European order. The police called upon to the protection of a peaceful citizen, when he is fallen upon by thieves, and in the act of being plundered, do not certainly attempt to compromise matters by

allowing the trespassers to walk away with any part of the spoil. It is not at the close of a period of wars and revolutions, the Danes say, that the downfall of their nation, even from the third rank it occupied, is resolved upon. There are epochs of political storms, when the frail bark of the Balance of Power must be got into port on any terms, when as much of its rigging and cargo must go overboard as the safety of the craft requires. Hard terms were laid upon Denmark, as on other minor States, at the time of the hurried Peace of 1814, and to these this country submitted, acknowledging the law of necessity. Again, there are changes which are only the ratification of some former error, wrongs to be repaired, and recent combinations to be upset. Such was the severance of Belgium from that kingdom of the Netherlands to whose destinies it had been unwisely associated. But in the present instance the thunderbolt falls upon Denmark from a perfectly clear unclouded sky. This unhappy State is foundering in the midst of a thorough European calm. A kingdom is to be broken up which has stood its ground for centuries, provinces are to be taken from it, the possession of which was secured by long prescription, by the faith of repeated agreements. The scandal to our age is greater than the injury to Denmark; the precedent that it establishes

more fatal than any world-wide disaster. That Austria and Prussia should use their might to the confusion of all right was bad enough; but it is infinitely worse that colossal Powers like France and England should not only wink at the most flagrant abuse of power, but that they should, as it were, meet the wrong-doers half-way, and suggest the basis on which they are ready to compound with iniquity. There is no question here of national principles or dynastic claims. The aggressors do not even make a show of standing on such flimsy pretences. They prefer their demands on their own good pleasure, simply because they know that the assailed party cannot resist them, and that the mediators are too fain to admit them. Henceforth let no small State base her hope of existence on any other ground than the forbearance of the large ones.

From the first moment that the frontiers of the Elbe and the Eider were violated, Denmark well knew that she should not come off scot-free. She looked forward to heavy losses, and prepared to resign herself. She would not submit without protest, but she well knew that the weak must go to the wall. Without allies or protectors she might well have been suffered to perish. But what humbles and prostrates her, what she can neither comprehend nor digest,—the unkindest

cut of all,—is, that those who have at all times admitted the justice and sanctity of her cause, those who were, in a certain measure, bound and pledged to uphold it, should, by a voluntary accord with the spoiler, make, as it were, common cause with him, and become sharers of his guilt.

These are the comments I hear on all sides with respect to the projected cession of Holstein, Lauenburg, and a part of Schleswig, to the German Powers. Deeper sorrow than I see depicted on the countenances of all honourable men here —a more universal sense of humiliation and despondency—I never, at any time, witnessed, in any country. The only consolation and hope of the Danes is that the Conference will turn out to be as impotent as it is in their opinion undignified and unscrupulous; that the drawing of a frontier line across any part of Schleswig will be found impracticable; that the Germans will strike for the possession of the whole of both Duchies; while the Danes, for their own part, would rather cut off their right hand than sign their name to any treaty which should assign to them less than the Schlei, the Dannewerk, the Treene, and the Eider, including the towns of Schleswig, Hollingstedt, Frederickstadt, and Tönning—a line that has, at least, the advantage of being a natural boundary and a strong military

frontier—a line, too, which would leave the Germans all they waged war for, the harbour of Kiel, with both sides of the bay, and the coveted stronghold of Rendsburg. Had no foreign Power "meddled and muddled," the Danes think they could hardly have obtained less honourable terms even from such enemies as Austria and Prussia—even from such enemies when flushed by success.

There was a time, in the heat of warlike excitement, when the Danes looked forward to some such arrangement of their dispute with Germany as is now contemplated, not only with resignation, but actually with grim satisfaction. Hitherto the national and political feeling was uppermost. The Danes were anxious to remain Danes above all things, at any price, and they seemed ready enough to part with that portion of their fellow-subjects who exhibited such strong Teutonic propensities. It was the Eider-Danish party, especially, whose voice was loudest at the outbreak of the war, who talked most glibly about 'lopping off a rotten limb,' and 'drawing a line somewhere, anywhere, so as to be rid for ever of this plague of all-absorbing Germanism.' To these first outbursts of enthusiasm sober reflections succeeded. A partition of the Duchy

of Schleswig, even if it were practicable, would, the Danes now think, be hardly less injurious to them than the loss of the whole territory. Dismemberment is destruction to their Monarchy; it is the death of a State which, within its limited dimensions, was one of the most flourishing and best regulated in Europe. Financial gentlemen begin to make their voices audible amongst the din of demagogic bluster; and the question arises as to the condition in which Denmark would be left in the event of the whole or the best part of the Duchies being made over to the overbearing invader.

The finances of the State of Denmark presented a very cheerful aspect on the decease of the late King. The little State had healed the wounds inflicted by the wars and revolutions of 1848, and was almost altogether out of debt. The army, on the peace footing, did not exceed 10,000 men, and the fleet was mostly in harbour. The support of a host five times as large in the field for four months, the purchase of arms, vessels, and stores, the probability of having to pay the enemy's expenses, besides her own, at the end of the war, will cause a serious derangement in the balance of accounts against Denmark. Some heavy loans will be found indispensable,

and although the moneyed men here feel assured that the country will be able to meet all its liabilities, still, they also think, it will be impossible to make the two ends meet without a very considerable rise in the public burdens. There are central, and, as it were, metropolitan expenses in all long-constituted States which no Chancellor of the Exchequer can find a way to reduce, which will continue to be the same, whether the territory of the State shrinks or expands, whether its prosperity ebbs or flows. Such are, to a certain extent, the civil list, the maintenance of parks, palaces, and other national domains, the endowment of museums, academies, universities, charitable institutions, &c., which are wound up with the very existence of a community, and are rather in proportion with its advance in civilization than with its material revenue. The whole or the greatest part of this expenditure will remain about the same for Denmark, whether two-fifths of her income are taken from her or not. What Schleswig and Holstein contributed to the State treasury will have to be made up by the remaining provinces, in the event of those Duchies being withdrawn from its allegiance. Three-fifths of the Danish population will have to bear, not only the whole of the old burdens, but also the additional charges of the late war and of its worst consequences.

There is an immense amount of fortitude and resignation among the Danes themselves, and the new state of things will be borne quietly, and even cheerfully, by the people of the islands; but how will it be in the event of a separation between the north and the south of Schleswig? How will it be with those German or Germanized elements of that mixed population who are now 'fraternizing with their Prussian liberators, getting up addresses to the Prince of Augustenburg, and dreaming of their eternal incorporation with their big Vaterland?' How would these accommodate themselves, not only to a restoration of the Danish rule, but also to a severe and almost crushing aggravation of the former burdens, especially if they had before them the contrast of their emancipated brethren, who would, in all probability, be humoured and petted for some time, and into whose pockets their new rulers would dive as tenderly and considerately as circumstances allowed?

So serious and so manifold are the difficulties with which this Dano-German question has been complicated, at least in the estimation of persons who look deep into affairs, and weigh the *pro* and *contra* of any resolution the Government may come to. Only six months ago, the State of Denmark was one of the best organized, and whatever German agitators may *now* say, not one

word of complaint was heard—no real serious cause of discontent arose. But now a blow has been dealt, the edifice has been sapped at the foundation, and little less than the hand of Heaven is required to prevent its crumbling to dust altogether. The 'Personal Union' will not save Denmark, not unless every inch of its territory is utterly withdrawn from any ascendancy of that absurd German Diet. No partition line can be drawn between North and South Schleswig, so as to give satisfaction to either party, no territorial cession can be demanded of Denmark, without reducing her to such straits as may usher in disorganization and bankruptcy. And all remedies of the kind that might be contrived would be merely palliatives; the question would not be solved, but merely adjourned. The real struggle lies between an expansive and aggressive, and a shrinking and dwindling nationality. If Germanism, between 1848 and 1864, gained ground from Rendsburg to Schleswig, there is no surety that it may not make its further way between Schleswig and Flensburg, between Flensburg and Apenrade, and so on throughout the Duchy and even into Jutland, in the next twelve or fourteen years.

It cannot be expected, of course, that the Danes

should divest themselves of the interest which their country has in the issue of the negotiation now pending, but apart from the very existence of Denmark itself, they think their cause ought to have the utmost importance in the eyes of the whole world. Chivalry is at an end in our age, and the police has taken its place. It is not for the sake of the weak that we take up their cause against the strong, but for our own. Ours is only an *hodie tibi, cras mihi* policy. It is not because the burglar has broken into my neighbour's house that I shoot him down; it is because from the adjoining premises he can make his way into my own.

Now what general interest for the cause of public order and tranquillity has this Dano-German question? How much does it matter to Europe whether Denmark is dismembered, or altogether blotted out from the roll of her States? This is the query the Danes put to themselves, and they still flatter themselves that the answer ought to be no less favourable to them than it was to the Turks under perfectly analogous circumstances. There was no great sympathy felt for the 'sick man;' but Europe deemed it expedient to prolong his agony—at least until she could come to some agreement as to the disposal of his property. Denmark is, Heaven knows, neither infirm nor decrepid; she causes

her neighbours no uneasiness, either by her aggressive or anarchic tendencies; she is one of the best governed, most enlightened, freest, happiest, communities on earth. Her only offence is that she is a small State; and the question that is now pending before a tribunal of European diplomatists is whether small States have or have not right to exist—whether, by the absorption of the whole or part of a comparatively defenceless country, an overbearing Power is to be allowed to acquire so much strength as to enable it to proceed from conquest to conquest till it attains an undue and unbearable weight on the European balance.

Of all the big blunders of which the hasty patchers-up of the Peace of 1814 made themselves guilty, none was so enormous as that of the reconstitution of the German Confederacy. No nation in the world had a clearer right to existence than the German nation. Freely she should have been allowed to dispose of herself at her own pleasure, to restore her ancient Empire, or to organize herself into a Staatenbund, or into a Bundestaat, to choose one Sovereign, or to acquiesce under the rule of her thirty-six princes. The only error, and it was a capital one, and fraught with endless trouble and danger to the common peace, was to maintain and perpetuate that *mixtum imperium* which was the most absurd

anomaly of the feudal system. If there was any basis on which the new public order could be safely grounded, it was most certainly this, that everyone should be master in his own house; that no people should be made to serve two masters. Nothing could be more monstrous than that Holstein should be both Danish and German. The affinity and the mutual sympathy between the Scandinavian and the Teutonic races were too strong, that the evils of so untoward an arrangement should be at once apparent; but the mischief wrought its effects in time, and the result is the danger of a universal subversion.

The Danes at no time harboured an insuperable illwill against the Germans. Even at the present moment, after such cruel provocation, the Danish feeling towards Germany is rather anger than hatred. The two sister races settled side by side in dark times, when neighbourhood was almost in itself a cause for enmity, and kindred itself a stimulus to rivalry. For a long lapse of years the more enterprising and needy Northman pressed upon the boundaries of his tardier Teutonic brother, but his wild oats were sown at last, and, accepting the Eider or the Elbe as his boundary, he became one of the most orderly and respectable members of the European community. Had the frontier line been permanently fixed either at the Elbe or the Eider, the Dane and the German

would never have had anything to part between them. It was, as it were, to guard against such happy consummation that those blundering negotiations of 1814 threw in that bone of contention of amphibious Holstein. Had it not been for that unfortunate bit of disputed territory, the mental and moral conquest and absorption of Denmark by Germany would have been peacefully and happily accomplished, not only without danger, but with signal benefit to the common tranquillity of Europe. It is only by a long residence in this country that one can perceive the full extent to which the Dane had been for centuries Germanized. Aware of their waning strength and importance, estranged from their Scandinavian brethren across the Sound by long rivalry and hostility, unable to constitute an intellectual and social centre of their own, the Danes imported German civilization by wholesale, and merged their very existence into that of the larger and mentally more active community. Hamburg was, and to a great extent is, far more the capital and mart of the Danish mainland than Copenhagen. In Zealand itself the style of building, the furniture, the bedding, the cookery, all that makes up domestic and social existence, is German. Glance at the shelves of a good many public or private libraries, you will find, even at the present moment, German books

outnumbering all other books, the Danish included. Go into the reading-room of the Copenhagen Athenæum, and you will find twenty German papers for one French or English. The ascendancy that France exercised in Piedmont previous to Charles Albert's reign, was equally exercised in Denmark on the part of that strongly-developed German vitality. The Court was German from generation to generation; with it the fashions set in the manners, the ideas, the language. You have only to look at one of the two-thaler pieces of 1789, and you will find that the King of Denmark styled himself 'Duke of *Schleswig-Holstein*,' not of *Sleswig*, and not even of *Schleswig* and *Holstein*. He adopted the spelling and the very hyphen on which the so-called national party in the Duchies now lay so much stress.

What of it? Cannot neighbouring people live in the closest terms of amity and intimacy without conspiring against each other's peace and security? Must mental and moral ascendancy necessarily lead to political absorption? The action and reaction of the civilization of different countries upon one another is one of the irresistible laws of human progress, and ought to be highly conducive to the spread of universal well-being. There is no reason why it should lead to the treading out of one human family by the iron heel of another.

The real glory of Denmark has long since departed: her crown has been reft of her brightest jewels in epochs now remote: she has since 1814 sunk to the rank of a third-rate State. Were she now robbed of Holstein, and of a part or the whole of Schleswig, she would only have, as she had for the last fifty years, an existence based on the faith of public treaties, on the common law and policy of nations. She would be no more able to hold her own against powerful aggressors than she has been since the battle of the Baltic and the bombardment of Copenhagen. Not much more, not much less. Half-a-million more or less of subjects would signify but little. Her fate—that of Belgium, of Holland, of Switzerland, of so many minor States—is, as it has been, to live on sufferance. The question is not whether she is or not to be stripped of her property, but only which of her neighbours is to be enriched with her spoils. Nor is it so much what Germany would now take that should weigh upon the mind of European statesmen, as the use to which she would turn her first conquests, her expanding views, her far-reaching designs. Give her half Denmark, she will subjugate, she will assimilate the whole. Establish her on the Eider, and you will see her on the Sound. This Schleswig-Holstein question has supplied her with what she has been wanting for centuries—unity of

purpose, harmony of views. Neither the Danes nor any other European people would have looked with disfavour upon the consolidation of German unity. They would have applauded the reconstitution of the German nation, as they did the regeneration of Italy; but it was fated that Germany should seek in foreign conquest that rallying point which she cannot find in her natural cohesion and compactness. It is for Europe to see if it be just that Germany should build her nationality on the ruin of others; if it be just that Denmark should perish in order that Germany may live.

Should any part of territory for ever be lost to Denmark and made over to Germany, what would the latter do with it? To which of the States of the old Confederacy would the long-coveted 'sea-girt' provinces be annexed, and what new order of things would their incorporation bring about in the unsettled and discordant Vaterland?

'Prince Frederick of Augustenburg is a highly unpopular personage in this country; the Danes look upon him as a rebel and a traitor, a man lost to all feelings of honour. Still, he is the elect of that party which is now the noisiest in

Schleswig-Holstein, and the general impression is, that were it possible to remove all restraint from the infatuated people from the Elbe to the Eider, from Altona to Flensburg—were it possible to make a fair, open appeal to the suffrage of the multitude—the so-called patriotic agitators would carry the day, and Frederick of Augustenburg would be Duke of Schleswig-Holstein by virtue of a tolerably unanimous *plébiscite*. One more Prince would be added to the five-and-thirty members of the German Confederacy; and the new State, left to itself, might become a sufficiently orderly and comparatively harmless neighbour to Denmark. But a similar arrangement, the Danes feel assured, would be very far from fulfilling the wishes and gratifying the roused ambition of Germany. There is a strong revolution at work in the heart of that country. Schleswig-Holstein is not an end, but a means; the real drift of German patriotism is national unity. The people of Germany, always discordant on every point, only joined in one combined effort in the Schleswig-Holstein movement of 1848–50. On that occasion they were thwarted and beaten back by their own Governments; but at this present juncture they forced their Governments along with them; first, the minor States—Hanover, Saxony, Baden, Nassau; then the Bund; finally, reactionary Prussia and

anti-national Austria herself. '*L'Allemagne a conquis ses Rois!*'

Whatever may be the fiat of the Conference; whatever the vote of Kiel, Schleswig, Flensburg; whatever the place assigned thereby to Frederick of Augustenburg, Germany thinks that Schleswig-Holstein has been conquered for Germany, for Germany alone, and for all Germany; that Schleswig-Holstein is to be given to that Sovereign, or to that commonwealth of Sovereigns, with whom or with which Germany may identify herself. It may be to liberalized, or rather *nationalized* Prussia; it may be to a reorganized Bund. It matters little. Germany is everywhere looking for a head. Whoever will undertake to lead her shall have Schleswig-Holstein; and Augustenburg may, at the utmost, be the vassal and lieutenant of him who will asume the power, if not actually the diadem, of the old German Empire.

Prussia, or at least her Generals, in this sorrowful Danish war well understood the mission imposed upon them by the popular will, and they took possession of the invaded land, not in the name of Augustenburg, and not in that of their own William, but in that of Germany,—of that vague abstraction, of that 'geographic fiction,' which, like that other geographic expression, Italy, is struggling into real positive existence.

Rendsburg is to be erected into a Federal fortress, Kiel is to become a Federal harbour. Should the Federation at any time attain the consistency of a real State, or should, what seems more practicable, one of its members gain such an ascendancy over it all as to bring the other States to revolve as mere satellites round its system, Kiel and Rendsburg would be Imperial —they would be German; as much so as they were under Charlemagne or Otho.

The coalescence of the various members of the German family into a State, into a nation, may still seem to many a chimera past realization. Social and religious dissensions, traditional rivalries, municipal and provincial antipathies, conflicting interests and tendencies—the whole past and present—would seem to be against it. Still Germany, unlike the Italy of 1859, is mistress of her own destinies; she has no foreign yoke, no hordes of Croatians upon her neck. She is armed, strong, full of life and energy. Her will is law to Europe, so far as her own destinies are concerned. Nay, there is not a generous, far-sighted man in Europe who would not look upon her unification as a blessing for her neighbours no less than for herself. Germany is the only counterpoise that Europe could now hope to rear against the overwhelming ascendancy of France. She could act on the Continent the part played

in former times by the Spanish and German Houses of Austria, as rivals to the dangerous ambition of the Bourbons.

Only, how would the conditions of Denmark be affected by such an arrangement? How would Denmark fare if her neighbour were not a petty Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenburg, but a great William of Germany, a State bordering on the Alps and the Danube, with its head at Frankfort or Berlin? It is this thought that puzzles and distresses the Danes. Their juxtaposition to a real, living Germany would at no distant period lead to their utter absorption. Yet, I have said it, there is nothing absolutely irreconcilable in the feelings of resentment with which the Dane has lately been brought to look upon the German. 'Alas! they had been friends in youth.' Germany had exercised more influence, had cast a stronger spell of attraction upon Denmark than was, in the course of events, proved to be good for the latter country. Social and moral assimilation preceded political invasion and led to it. Is it in the power of disenchanted Denmark to resist further encroachment, to put a stop to further assimilation? There are some of the Danes who flatter themselves it is. 'Only let a clear line be drawn at the Eider, at the Schlei, or even at the Konigsau (Konge-Aa),' say the leaders of the Eider-Danish party, 'and

that will be a very China wall for ever parting the Scandinavian from the Teuton.' I wish I could share their sanguine convictions. For my own part, I think the Danes may well devoutly pray for eternal division and confusion to Germany; for the day that brings either unity, or even anything like practical union, to the German *Vaterland* is fraught with supreme danger to the Danish *Fædreland*. The day that Germany lives —really lives—Denmark has but little chance to exist.

There are men in Denmark, I know, who think that their country has a future of its own as well as Germany; who think that there is such a thing as a Scandinavian no less than a Teutonic Bund; and that their purely Danish provinces, when rid of Germanized elements, may form a union with Sweden and Norway which may enable them to hold their own against all aggression from the South, as well as from the East. For my own part, I have no great faith in the prospects of the so-called Scandinavian party. I think it has no very deep roots among the people on either side of the Sound. From the days of Margaret to those of Christian IX., Denmark has clung more closely to Germany than to Sweden; and when for the first time collision arose between Denmark and Germany, in 1848 and 1864, Sweden has either stood aloof,

impassive, or the aid she lent was little better than mockery and deceit.

Denmark, I am afraid, has little to expect from Sweden, who, in her turn, will have at some future time to reckon with a neighbour hardly less powerful, hardly more scrupulous, than Germany is to Denmark. Denmark has to settle her accounts with Germany, and the immediate question is, what terms can the Conference enforce, or even propose, that may break Denmark's fall, and put off as far as possible the final evil day.

There is a third party of Danish politicians, whose voice, truly, is scarcely audible amidst the turmoil of their self-asserting adversaries, in whose opinion the difficulty admits of another solution, the only plausible one. The settlement of the Dano-German quarrel, these men contend, will never be achieved by the well-meant contrivance of foreign mediators. Danes and Germans should be left to treat their own affairs by themselves, to come to such an arrangement as may and must be based on their common interests, and lead to future relations of mutual support and dependence. The time is rather premature for the mere broaching of such a scheme; the exasperation of men's minds on either side is at present too great to seem to

leave room for any chance of future understanding. Yet, I repeat, there are here, even among the Danish patriots, people who think that it is always wise 'to look upon the very worst enemy as one who may eventually become the very best friend.' These think that, as Germany is so bent on devouring a part of Denmark, she should be made to swallow the whole. For these the notion of the whole of Denmark becoming a member of the German Confederacy has nothing so very formidable; they think that by coming to a compact of offensive and defensive alliance, of commercial and diplomatic union with Germany, Denmark would not only recover her invaded provinces, and secure the position of all her territory, but would also be allowed to govern her subjects, German as well as Danish, as freely, and as much in accordance with her own free laws and institutions, as Prussia and Austria are tyrannizing over their own at this moment. It is a fixed idea with the Danes, that the difficulties in which they find themselves involved, are, in a great measure, the consequence of the happy change which put an end to old absolutism in their country, and added them to the number of constitutional states; they are confident that those very popular institutions which raised them to the dignity of self-ruling, responsible beings, made them no less the object of the

envy of the liberals of Germany, than a reproach to the misrule of her besotted despots. Now the entrance of Denmark into the Bund would change all that. She would not only take rank as the third State in the Confederacy, and become its leader and standard-bearer at sea, but she would be the rallying point for those German agitators who are in vain looking for a head in Bavaria or Saxony, in Baden, in Nassau, or even at Coburg. The notion of absorbing Denmark by admitting her bodily into the Bund, has been for a long time cherished by some of those German patriots, whose aspirations aim no higher than an extension of territory, and the establishment of a German military power at sea. Were such an idea to be realized, more than one party in Germany would be striving to reap its benefit for itself. It will take time, no doubt, before such proposals may even be made in the hearing of the rabid Eider-Danes; but the absorption of their country through the all-pervading German element is not the less being rapidly and inevitably accomplished. The question is whether the best policy may not be to look the evil in the face, and come to such a compact with Germany as would join the two countries rather on the equal terms of Confederacy than on the hard condition of the vassalage and subservience of the small to the stronger.

The great point to be considered, as far as the Danes themselves are concerned, is, whether they do think that they are going to be cruelly and inexorably left alone in the struggle, or whether they still expect any of the great Powers to enter the lists in their behalf: further, what they may hope to save of their frail vessel of State out of the general wreck of a European war; for, unless they have the utmost reliance on such prospects, the sooner they recognize the law of necessity, and bow to it, the better for them—if not for the rest of the world.

There is nothing more interesting than to see the great effects likely to spring from apparently small causes. The possession of Schleswig-Holstein, the decline and fall of a small State like Denmark, may seem to have claimed greater attention in Europe than the subject deserved. Yet, see the sequel! The Germans are far, as yet, from holding the isthmus of the Cimbrian peninsula in their grasp, and already they look upon it as another Suez or Panama. There is a scheme afloat for constructing a ship canal from the Bay of Kiel, or from that of Eckernförde, to the mouth of the Eider at Tönning, thus joining the Baltic with the North Sea. To what extent the project may admit of realization, what time

its completion would take, what outlay of money it would occasion, I have no means to ascertain. A so-called Eider Canal, starting from the Bay of Kiel, four miles to the north-east of the town, and joining the Eider at Rendsburg, is already in existence, and has already been frequently alluded to in the course of this narrative. There is little doubt but this canal could be dug broad and deep enough to allow the free passage of the largest vessels, either by following the line already in actual operation, or by tracing a new course from the Bay of Eckernförde, and taking advantage of the waters of the broad Windeby Nor, the Wittensee, and other inland lakes. So far as I hear, the engineers who have surveyed the ground apprehend no obstacles as to the navigability either of the canal itself, or of the Eider below Rendsburg; and the only serious difficulty might arise as to the practicability of opening and keeping open at Tönning, or at any other point on the western coast of the peninsula, a harbour answering all the purposes, and meeting all the requirements of an enterprise of such vast magnitude; for the whole of that western coast is little better than a sandbank, on which nothing solid can be built, except by the most strenuous exertions, and the most unflinching perseverance of human undertaking.

We live, however, in an age, in which a work

'if possible is already done, if impossible it is *sure* to be done.' Such a canal as is here projected, only requires strong and willing hands, and if the territory through which it is to run were to come into the power of Germany, it is by no means unlikely that the commercial and naval aspirations of that nation could inspire it with sufficient unanimity and steadiness of purpose to bring the enterprise to a successful issue. The mere establishment of a Federal naval station at Kiel, and of a German stronghold and garrison at Rendsburg seemed already schemes fraught with such serious consequences to the future tranquillity to Europe, that diplomatists busied themselves with plans for so tying the hands of the new possessor of Schleswig-Holstein, whoever he might be, that the objects nearest to German hearts could never be attained. The hands of a nation, of a strong, large, and striving nation, however, are not to be fettered down by such flimsy bonds as the mere words of a treaty. To give a State possession of a certain territory, and then to appoint limits within which its authority is to be exercised; to intimate to an independent sovereign to what extent he is to be master within his own premises, how far he may dispose of what is made over to him, and so turn it to the best purposes for himself—is one of the antiquated notions of that plodding diplomacy

which in our rational age ought to be utterly exploded. Whatever engagements the Germans may now be willing to enter into in order to annex the long-coveted provinces, there is no doubt but they will break their promise as soon as they can do so with impunity. They have run all the risks of a general war rather than forego the opportunity of securing Schleswig-Holstein: it will scarcely be the dread of such a war that will deter them from making their possession thorough and complete.

I take it for granted, therefore, that if the Germans get Kiel and Rendsburg, they will have their land and sea fortress, and also, that if the canal be but practicable, they will strain every nerve to go through with it. Has any one of the statesmen of the London Conference well weighed the eventual, however remote, consequences of such a consummation? It has been repeatedly said that by her conquest of the Duchies, Germany will ultimately obtain possession of the Sound; but is there any doubt, that, whenever it is done, the canal itself will be the Sound? Can there be any doubt that, on the canal being brought into operation, there would be an end of the best part of the trade of Copenhagen, of Elsinore, of the Öresund, an end of the little that remains of Danish commercial and naval prosperity? The circumnavigation of

Jutland is, in favourable weather, only the affair of two or three days; but the West Coast of the Peninsula, the Northern point at Skagen, and the Kattegat are, in the winter season, the terror of mariners; and who would any longer go round by that route, if a new passage from the North to the East Sea were opened between Tönning and Eckernförde or Kiel, and if the Canal-tolls were so proportioned to its advantages as to make the passage accessible even to the small craft which is now perpetually dotting the waves of this swarming Öresund? I am told, it is true, that the enormous expense of the enterprise will be for a long time—perhaps for ever—a hindrance to the establishment of low tolls; but a great nation like Germany can afford to dispense even with tolls altogether. She can cheerfully submit to any sacrifice which would virtually place the whole trade of the Baltic in her hands.

This as to peaceful times; but in the event of any warlike outbreak, the whole canal, with the two ports at its extremities, would become a harbour of refuge for its owner, whence he could shift his strength from sea to sea, slip from the grasp of a superior enemy on the one, or concentrate all his means and resources against a less powerful adversary upon the other. When one gives only a passing thought to the bare con-

tingencies of such a future, it becomes hardly possible to conceive how England, France, and other maritime powers could so easily give their assent to, or indeed even initiate a scheme by which any part of the Duchies should be made over to Germany; and it is but too easy to credit the report that Russia still entertains views favourable to the integrity of the Danish monarchy. If it was deemed expedient—indeed if it was looked upon as matter of supreme importance for the peace of Europe, and for the free navigation of the Baltic, that the Öresund should be in the hands of a third-rate power like Denmark, is it not equally or far more important that Denmark should retain possession of that line of the Eider, a canal through which would supersede the Sound, and would to all intents and purposes become the Sound? If the canal is feasible, if the canal is to be made, let it be done by Denmark, let it be trusted to Denmark's keeping. That is the only way by which such an enterprise may be made conducive, not only to the well-being and the very existence of Denmark itself, but also to the greatest possible advantage for the whole world.

It may be said, with good reason, that an enterprise of the nature that is here contemplated would be beyond the power of a small State like Denmark, a State enfeebled, also, and impoverished at this present juncture by the con-

sequences of a disastrous war. But what may be, perhaps, a drawback for Denmark itself, would surely be a further inducement to recommend the undertaking to some of the great Powers of Europe. If the canal is to be made, there is hardly a nation likely to reap greater benefits from it than England, and it would require no great persuasion to bring English capitalists to take it up. To talk of popular sympathies, of brotherhood of races, of close affinity of blood between Jutes and Angles, may be mere waste of breath; but it certainly takes no great amount of reasoning to prove that there is, or may arise, between the Danish and the English nation the closest community of interests. Restore Denmark to the full possession of her lands, rid her of German protectorate in Holstein, aid her in the construction of a safe and easy anchorage on the Western Coast of Schleswig, and there is no reason why she should not seek in London that mart which she has hitherto been compelled to look for in Hamburg. Strike up a bargain of offensive and defensive alliance between Denmark and England, and it will always be worth while for the latter, in consideration of the contingencies of war, to help the former in the excavation of the Eider Canal, even if that undertaking did not, in ordinary peaceful times, recommend itself as a lucrative speculation in a

merely commercial point of view. A constant intercourse with England can alone put a check on that overwhelming tide of Germanism which has threatened Denmark with total social and moral absorption, and which has led to political invasion. So long as England attaches any importance to her trade in the Baltic, so long as she values the advantage of a free access to that inland sea, so long is she interested, vitally interested, in the preservation of the State of Denmark, interested in identifying the independence of this small nation with her own well-being. The instinct of the English people seems to have felt all this; again and again, has there been a popular outcry for taking up arms in defence of the 'little fellow overcome in an unequal struggle with the two big ones.' There was more than the generous impulse of John Bull for the cause of the weaker party, more than his love of fair play at work in all that movement; but, unfortunately, England was and is under the control of statesmen who live only by the day; and the Dano-German contest in its main bearings may be said to be a question of the morrow. 'The day in which Kiel and Rendsburg and Tönning shall come into German hands will usher in no very pleasant times for England, not at any rate for English interests, commercial or naval, in the Baltic.

It is under the influence of considerations of this nature that the Danes have assumed in London that stubborn and defiant attitude which has so greatly astonished and perplexed friends and enemies amongst the members of the Conference. The King of Denmark published the other day, the 13th, a decree calling together the Rigsraad for the 25th instant. On that day, as you are aware, the prolonged armistice is to terminate, and some definite resolution will have to be taken as to the momentous question of war or peace. The Danes, at all events, express the utmost assurance that they will no longer be led by the nose by the shifts and delays of the London Conference; that they will not suffer the remaining summer months to be wasted in bootless negotiation; and that, unless some safe basis for a plausible agreement be laid before the expiration of the above-mentioned term, nothing will prevent a resumption of hostilities.

Threatened as it is with a mortal blow, this small but plucky Danish nation will never consent to play the part of the 'sick old man.' 'I'm over young to die yet,' is the theme of every song here; and I, who am believed to harbour no ill-will to their cause, must put up with the reproaches of my Danish friends as 'a man of little faith,' because I sometimes give expression to my misgivings as to the possibility of a mere

handful of men, however brave and determined, carrying on, single-handed, a struggle against two such giants as the great German powers.

There is no doubt, however, that the Danes, in the expected renewal of an appeal to arms, are under the influence of a strong faith that *this time* they will certainly not find themselves alone in the field. There is no saving them from a relapse into those illusions which have been so repeatedly and so harshly dispelled. England, they now think, is bound to the terms of her own proposal. Since the Treaty of 1852 was so cavalierly set aside, Lord Russell has come forth with his partition of Schleswig by a line to be traced along the Schlei and the Dannewerk, along the Treene and the Eider, from Kappeln to Frederickstadt. The Danes, however mortified about such terms, are not unwilling to close with them, and the more so as they feel sure that they can never be made acceptable to their adversaries. In the event of the Germans claiming more, the negotiation would of course break up, the Danes think, and if the cannon is once more to succeed to the protocol, why, what can England honestly do but to back her proposal by might of arms, and enter the lists, together with Sweden, in behalf of a nation to which she is bound by the

nearest ties of blood? Truly, it may be answered that Lord Russell is tied to nothing of the kind, and that when his endeavours as a peacemaker are at an end, he has only to throw up the cards, give up the game, wash his hands of it, and let the belligerents settle their dispute as best they can. But the Danes give John Bull credit for as much generosity as they would themselves be capable of in analogous circumstances, and they think all the more of his readiness to come down handsomely in their behalf as at the beginning of the century it was by John himself that they were reduced to the state of weakness which makes them so easy a prey to greedy and unprincipled neighbours.

Should England fail after all, the Danes are not 'at their wits' ends, nor is their reliance on foreign aid thoroughly shaken. There is, they think, such a Power as Russia in the world. A diplomatist (Baron V. Scheel Plessen, Danish Minister at St. Petersburg) has arrived here to-day, the bearer, it is said, of the good resolution of the Czar Alexander that the Treaty of London of 1852 should not be so much waste paper. 'The Czar will hear nothing,' they say, 'of a partition of Denmark;' he insists that the Duchies should continue to belong to the Danish

Crown by some scheme of personal union. Truly, the Russian proposal is, to say the least, as practicable as that put forth by the Western Powers. Anything that may tend to keep up the old state of things is far safer than any cobbling half-measure, opening the way for endless innovation. The war undertaken by Austria and Prussia has been stigmatized as a piece of unwarrantable aggression. If Europe was to interfere at all, it should have been not to sanction violence, but to thwart and even to punish it. The two German Powers have either no ground to stand upon, or it is only that same Treaty of 1852. They should be made, like the Papal Nuncio from Avignon, in the hands of the Visconti at Milan, to swallow that treaty, parchment, leathern strings, leaden seals and all. As to the German nation, and the plea put forth by its patriots as to their oppressed language in Schleswig, they might possibly have been entitled to some consideration if there were anybody in Germany talking rationally or acting consistently about such matters. 'Show us,' say the Danes, 'where your Deutsches Vaterland begins and ends, and we shall see whether any fraction of it lies within what has been for so many centuries our own territory. Give us evidence that you have or are soon going to have a house of your own, and we shall then know on what terms the people, who were

hitherto comfortable within our own premises, are to be received as your guests. Begin by setting your own affairs in order, and that will decide as to the expediency of letting the Schleswig-Holsteiners enter as partners in your concern. What good will it be to you to add that plausible gentleman, the Prince of Augustenburg, to the number of those crowned heads that make such a hopeless Babel of your Frankfort Bund? Tell us how much richer you will be by robbing the poor? how much nearer you will be to the Constitution of your foggy Vaterland by breaking up a national compact which gave the world no cause of complaint or uneasiness? how well you will provide for your peace and security by awakening the just jealousy of England, of Russia, of as many States as have a direct interest in the neutrality of the Sound and the free navigation of the Baltic? It is very well to wish for the exaltation of your own nationality, for the reconstruction of your old Teutonic empire. It is not only for your own sake, but for the sake of the world that thinking men would wish for the realization of your dearest dreams. A strong and compact Germany in the heart of Europe would be the best possible check to the ambition of France; but it is one thing to wish, another thing to hope, for such a consummation. A united Germany! One might as well long for the es-

tablishment of a line of packet balloons to the moon.'

It is but too generally the tendency of all people in distress to alternate between fits of extreme despondency and accesses of overweening confidence. Upon the hope, however vague and evanescent, of Russian aid, the Danes revert with fondness to the chance of altogether escaping the dismemberment of their ancient Monarchy. The whole of the Cimbrian peninsula, in their estimation, seems intended to belong to one master alone. Indeed, 'what more just and condign punishment could be inflicted upon Germany for her breach of the peace,' they say, 'than the total and final adjustment of Holstein and Schleswig to Denmark, and the withdrawal of the former Duchy from the undefined protectorate of that absurd political anachronism which is called the German Bund? The Germans came hither to rob: they deserve to be hanged, and ought they not to thank their stars if they are simply let off with a fine?'

But enough, and more than enough, of these melancholy delusions of brains fevered with excitement. We must leave the question of right

and wrong in abeyance, and only consider who, in this case, has the power as well as the will, to see justice done. That the Conference would come to nought, sane men were perfectly sure from the outset; they are more certain of it now, when only ten days remain for the furtherance of their inane procrastinations. Yet ten days and then—war! What a war, good Heaven! and what strangely-matched combatants! Ever since the Fall of Dybböl, I came to a strong conviction that Denmark's fighting days were over, and I do not expect her to take the field now, except by way of an armed protest against irresistible aggression—a dignified but unavailing protest. I do not fancy that a defence of Als will be attempted; and it seems to me only possible to make a stand at Strib and Middlefart, to dispute the passage of the Little Belt into Fünen. Even the defence of the Little Belt would require a good supply of rifled ordnance, and of the fifty pieces lately imported from France, as many as have been put to the trial have burst on the first discharge. Nor, it should be borne in mind, is the spirit of the Danish troops at the present moment such as to give promise of more than human exertions. The Danish officers are men full of honour, and they will certainly not fail to bring the sacrifice of life and limb for the cause of their country. Nay,

the younger officers, from the captains downwards, hasten to join their corps with sufficient cheerfulness and alacrity. But the field-officers, those on whom devolve the responsibilities of the conduct of a campaign, look, it were in vain to deny it, somewhat more than earnest and thoughtful, for they are aware of the difficulty of keeping up the courage of an army without the hope, however faint, of decisive and permanent success. Denmark has, moreover, not found a general as yet, and she has lost her best staff-officers in the late encounters. Notwithstanding the brilliant feat of arms off Heligoland, the commanders of the fleet are hardly less given to despondency as to any probability of prolonged superiority at sea. The advance of the Austrian frigates into the Baltic, and the expected arrival of two iron-clads supplied by the Americans to Prussia, would, again, give the Germans redoubtable odds even in what was hitherto Denmark's native element. Prodigies of valour might, indeed, enable the weaker party to prolong the struggle for two or three months—throughout the summer, perhaps; but the catastrophe which would lay her at the mercy of her destroyers, however delayed, cannot be averted. Actual conflict might be ruinous to this country, but the Germans could even more efficiently undo it by no fighting at all. The 26th of June brings about the expiration

of the armistice, but a resumption of hostilities is by no means the immediate and inevitable consequence. There were three weeks actual *waffenruhe* in Als after the fall of Dybböl, although the belligerents had not then agreed as to a *waffenstillstand.* The Germans have it in their power to wear out the Danes by sheer inaction, and it is by no means unlikely that they will adopt this safer, though more inglorious, course. War implies attack no less than defence, and if the Austro-Prussians will limit their conquest to the Duchies, can they not, by simply prolonging the occupation of Jutland, wait until the spirit of the Danes is utterly broken, and then offer to withdraw from that Province, on condition of the final surrender of all claims on the part of Denmark to the whole of Schleswig-Holstein, and the cession of Als, of Arroe, and the other islands which are considered as integral portions of that territory? The Northern extremity of the Peninsula is a more than sufficient pledge in the hands of the Germans, not only to secure the eventual possession of the Southern districts, but to wring from the exhausted Danes every farthing of the war expenses. The question is simply reduced to know to what extent the Germans will push their advantage, or what mercy they will show to an enemy who has given them so little provocation. On the part of Germany, the

resumption of hostilities is simply murder; on that of Denmark, merely suicide.

It also remains to be seen how far Europe will be content to stand by and see the completion of a deed of iniquity which has already been so much more than half achieved. For my own part, I wish with all my heart that my worst forebodings may prove false; but I confess that I do not clearly see from what quarter rescue and salvation may come. I hear reports of movements of the English fleet, of probable withdrawal of the British Ministers from Berlin and Vienna. But, whatever may be thought of mere vain demonstrations, I do not think that England can or will move in this matter without the co-operation of France. The mere neutrality of the latter power could not be safely relied on, nor would it be sufficient to enable Great Britain to carry on a war by land as well as by sea against that might of Germany, which, in the event of English interference, would be brought into the field with the utmost compactness and determination.

Nor is there, in my opinion, any probability of Russia proceeding to active measures in behalf of Denmark, and in opposition to those German Powers with which the fate of Poland joins her in an indissoluble compact of blood. However strong may be the bias of my own wishes to the

contrary, I cannot help closing these pages by the expression of my strong conviction, that, without the unexpected interposition of Providence, or of that terrible wielder of Providential Omnipotence in Continental European affairs, the Emperor of the French—the sacrifice of Denmark—ay, and the disgrace of Europe—will shortly be consummated.

Elsinore, June 15th, 1864.

APPENDIX.

OFFENCE GIVEN TO THE DANES.

As a specimen of the remonstrances to which a 'Correspondent' is exposed on the part of friends, who think him not sufficiently just to their cause, I hope I may be allowed to subjoin a letter from a Danish gentleman, upon whose good opinion I set the highest value, and whose complaints, as they come from a full heart, are entitled to the most earnest attention. I give his letter in his own English, without altering a syllable, as I think with his proficiency in this language, the apology with which he concludes was perfectly unnecessary.

All I can say in my own exculpation, as to what I related of the behaviour of the Copenhagen people at the great funeral ceremony of the 27th of April is, that my remarks, if they were found to some extent severe and even cynical, must apply not merely to the Danes, but equally to the whole of the human race. It is not easy to keep up for any length of time, the earnest and sober feelings of a vast multitude. The Copenhagen citizens not only behaved no worse, they behaved infinitely better, than Parisians or Londoners would have done under analogous circumstances. Still, the day was fine, the sun shone bright, and it was hard to resist the smile of perfect happiness that pervaded on that sweet April morning the whole of creation; and the very thronging together of so vast an assemblage, the glittering arms, the waving colours, the swelling strains, the very display of all those gorgeous trappings of mourning greatly interfered with that concentration which is so essential to the indulgence of real heartfelt grief.

Here, now, follows my friend's letter, without further comment:—

'Friday, Mai 6ter, 1864.

'DEAR SIR,—As a supplement to our conversation last night, I cannot but state to you the deep regret with which I have read in Monday's "Times" your letter from the 1ste April, especially the last lines.

'"The Copenhagen people have had their *gala day*, and the *enjoyment* of the hour *drove from their minds all thoughts* either of the disaster that occasioned it, or of any other evils that may have to follow."

'Now, these words are not facts; they contain your interpretation of what you think to be facts, namely, that one had to look in vain for expressions of general sorrow. We are not an expressing people, we seldom show our feelings in public; but this I can say as an eye-witness of that day's solemn funeral, that very few eyes were left dry, and that the great majority of this "well-dressed and better behaved" crowd felt as vividly as you would have felt by a similar procession in Italy, their hearts throbbing in woe. But, supposing even your statement of the appearance to be right, how can you judge of the inner thoughts of a crowd, whose national character is almost as unknown to you as their language? How can you, the well-wisher of our country, the sincere sympathizer with the nation, have the cruelty—I cannot find any other word for it—to believe yourself, and to depict to the world the inhabitants of the Danish capital as a crowd of gaping sight-seers, delighted to have some pageant moving through their streets, but not giving a thought to the heroes fallen, or to the disaster connected with their death? Indeed, sir, you cannot have written these cruel words unless you have been entirely under the spell of military rancour as exhibited in Alsen by our officers against the Copenhagen press; but I can assure you, that not even the most discontented cavalry-lieutenant would have had the

heart to throw out so bitter and so unjust an accusation against the Copenhageners.

'No wonder that the German papers have delighted their readers with this description. The "Cologne Gazette" adds, "and so writes a fanatical friend of the Danes." Of course, the mites of sympathy, of friendly feelings towards Denmark which are mingled with your condemning judgments, are withheld by the German papers; but, seriously speaking, I cannot see that they do anything but render your concluding sentences the more condemning.

'You constantly speak of Denmark as the doomed victim, as the "felled bullock." Is this right, when the tribunal of the Conference is still sitting? Can this anticipating of an event, unhappily likely enough to come, but still only probable, be of any advantage to England or Denmark? Or is it not seriously damaging to our cause?

'You say, that with Dybböl we have lost "nearly one-half" of our small army. Our loss is at the highest estimated to 5,000 men; the army must be taken to be at least 30,000 or 35,000; why then exaggerate to such a degree? And would our position have been materially altered to our advantage, if we had retreated from Dybböl, not lost it? Evidently not! The war would as well have been ended under that eventuality as it can be said to be ended now. We should still have had to give up Fredericia, Alsen would still be at the enemy's mercy, Jutland would still be overrun and plundered. We should only have had an army stronger by 5,000 men, but weaker perhaps by a feeling of its unbloody retreat, harder to bear than the loss in battle. Now, I confess 5,000 men to be very much for us; the loss of so many able and gallant officers and solders is still more. But it cannot make the difference between life and death for the country, between victory and destruction for our cause.

'Forgive me, dear sir, if in expressing my feelings I have spoken too warmly, or if from imperfect knowledge of language I have made use of terms unbecoming. It is far from my intentions to hurt you, but on the other hand I have, for

my country's sake, deemed it my duty to state to you the impression of your last letters, doubly bitter for us because they come from one in whom we have learned to value so many high qualities and in whom we hoped to have gained a friend, not only *de passage*, but a real friend in need. There is perhaps not one single writer existing whose pen can so much benefit or so deeply damage Denmark's cause as you in your present position. I implore you not to forget this, and not to let the transient impressions of the instant influence your general view of the situation. Be against us, if in honesty and truth you cannot be for us. But I beg you never to forget that one rash word, which you may afterwards yourself regret, can damage us to an extent not dreamed of, for as you said, *verba volant, scripta manent.*

'Repeating my excuses for this too long letter,

'I remain, &c.,

'_____.'

THE END.

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